
Александр Меров
Порабощённый мир
Организованный гнев
роман

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часть III

Порабощённый мир

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Порабощённый мир III: Организованный гнев

Экономическая ситуация в Европе в 2033 году безнадёжна как никогда. Мировое правительство беспощадно эксплуатирует угнетённые страны. Артур Чистоков, юный белорусский диссидент, становится во главе освободительного движения Русь, небольшой группы сопротивления, борющейся в подполье против властей. В то время как Белоруссии грозит ужасный экономический кризис, мятежники поднимают революционное движение, к которому присоединяется всё большее число недовольных. Франк и его соратники следуют за готовым на всё главарём мятежников Чистоковым, пока им ничего не остаётся, кроме как бегства вперёд...

Предисловие

Дорогой читатель,

перед тобой издание первой части моего футуристического романа "Порабощённый мир" на английском языке. Позволь пригласить тебя в мрачное будущее, которое, может статься, намного реальнее, чем ты на первый взгляд можешь себе представить. Я буду очень рад, если однажды эта книга будет переведена и на русский язык.

Александр Меров

Alexander Merow and Thorsten Weber, Berlin 2011

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Артур Чистоков

Дорога Руси

Витебск в 2034 году

„My enemies will laugh about me. They will laugh about me and my movement, and will say: “That Tschistokow is nothing but a little worm, because he has nothing. And a man who has nothing, is nothing but a little worm!”
Yes, maybe they have all the power, the money, the military and the media, but they forget that I have a lot of very strong allies! My allies are: poverty, hunger, discontent, hate, injustice, fear, hopelessness, despair, oppression, disorientation and many more!
A few decades ago, the Europeans have lived in a giant cage of illusions, our enemies had built for them. They have lived in the great illusion of freedom and wealth. And a false freedom and a deceitful wealth have been the two things which have made them to happy slaves. But these illusions have already died in 2018.
And all what remained were our allies, that will help us now to fight the world enemy. God bless our allies! They make us the gift of millions of Europeans who have nothing to lose anymore. They force the people to fight and sort out the cowards and weaklings. Therefore, the enemy should never underestimate our allies, because they will give us the hotbed a revolution needs!”

Artur Tschistokow in: “The Way of the Rus”, chapter XVIII, “The Coming Awakening”

“If you give the right ideas to the European man, he develops an incredible eagerness to bring order to the world around him, he brings the light of civilization to other continents, he writes down the greatest works of philosophy, he invents planes and spaceships to conquer the sky and even the universe. But if you give him the wrong ideas, he will use the same eagerness to destroy himself!”

Artur Tschistokow in: “The Way of the Rus”, chapter IX, “Rising from the Ashes”

“What is the greatest talent of the tick? It is the ability to fall on a dog and crawl through its coat to find a place to suck blood - all without being noticed. That`s the great skill nature has given to it.
But even thousands of ticks cannot rule over a dog`s life. To the contrary, they can only suck their host dry and kill it, because nature didn`t also give the tick the skill to reign. And it is the same with our enemies. The moment they gain command over this planet, their rule will start to crumble...”

Artur Tschistokow in: “The Way of the Rus”, chapter VI, “The Enemy Unmasked”

“The answer to the ingrained and malicious hate of the world enemy shall be the wrath of the righteous!”

Artur Tschistokow in: “The Way of the Rus”, chapter VII, “The Intellectual Base of Resistance”

Artur Tschistokow

It was raining outside and darkness had fallen over the bleak estate of prefabricated houses in the southern part of the Belarusian city of Vitebsk. Artur Tschistokow, a tall man of 31 years, sat at his shabby kitchen table and played thoughtfully with a little shot glass which danced around between his fingers.
He took another sip of cheap swill and stared at the wall with his bright, blue eyes. Today he was more nervous than ever, because the GSA, the international secret service, was upon his heels. Agents of the World Government had come to Belarus and intensively searched for him. This was no pleasant situation. But here, in this gray ghetto of apartment blocks, full of poverty and dreariness, they would not find him. Tschistokow was not registered anymore, he had no more Scanchip and he left his apartment which had been rented by an unremarkable person, only in case of necessity. His friends and comrades supplied him with food and paid his bills. There was no other way.
The young man was always quiet and appeared to his neighbors as a shadow, when he sneaked along the corridor of his floor in the night, never saying a word.
Furthermore, he had no more telephone and no Internet connection. This was much too dangerous in a time of total surveillance. Artur Tschistokow had just vanished, living a ghostly life now. No official data base could find him anymore – and this was his only chance to survive.
The Russian went to the fridge, an ugly, battered thing in the corner of his kitchen, and took out a sandwich. Then he sat down in the living room to drink the next bottle of vodka. This life was painful, but it was still better, than being caught

and liquidated. Artur stroked through his stringy, blond hair and his long face with the pointed chin became a tragic mask. He looked out the window again, but there was nobody. Only the rain, the darkness and an old street lamp with a loose connection, flashing all the time.
Some of the windows in the block of flats opposite were still illuminated. Who lived his sad life behind those curtains? Perhaps a man who was just as unhappy as Tschistokow. After a few hours, he fell asleep on the couch, with a woozy head. This day was over.

In the early morning hours of the next day came Peter Ulljewski, Artur`s best friend and political companion, bringing some bread and a dozen sausages. Peter was 34 years old and a craftsman. A few months ago, he had moved to Vitebsk, together with Artur, and lived now in a small apartment in the outskirts. The strong man with the angular face and the broad shoulders told Tschistokow the latest news, what made his friend still more nervous.
”They have arrested two of our men last night, Andrej and Igor!”, he said. “Both have distributed our newspapers, when the damn cops have caught them.”
”Two men less...”, muttered Artur, falling back on his shabby sofa.
”But this looks good, right?”, remarked Peter, pulling a thin newspaper out of his pocket.
He gave it to his friend. Tschistokow examined everything and finally nodded.
“Yes, it`s a great work, Peter. My editorial about the new administration tax is on the cover page. Nice!”, meant Artur and smiled for a short moment.
“We will print about 10000 copies of this edition. I told our young comrades that they have to be more careful, when

they distribute our promo material", said Peter and took a bottle of soda out of the fridge.
"At first, we will spread our newspapers and leaflets only in Vitebsk - and only in estates of prefabricated houses. In quarters like this, we will get the most encouragement from the population", ordered Tschistokow with serious face.
"What`s about the stickers?"
"About 20000 are in print", replied Ulljewski.
"Okay! This is better than nothing." Artur tried to smile again and went straight to the window. "And the group in Minsk?"
"They want 20000 stickers too!", answered his comrade.
"If there is some money left, then we let them print as fast as possible", said Tschistokow and drew the curtains.
"Three days ago, you were on television. They have shown a picture of you and asked the people for informations", told Ulljewski.
"I already know that – from Vladimir!", the blond man returned quietly. "Was something in the papers too?"
"Just a small article about our spraying last Tuesday. Nothing important, but meanwhile they know us! And they seem to pay a bit more attention to our actions..."
"Certainly!", murmured Tschistokow thoughtfully.
"Anyhow, everything is ready for Saturday. What`s about your speech, Artur?", asked Ulljewski.
"I work on it! Don`t worry. I know enough things to say. This is our smallest problem, my friend!"
Some minutes later, Peter said goodbye and left the room silently.
"I`ll pick you up at 18.00 o`clock!", he finally whispered and shut the door behind him.
Artur Tschistokow looked nervously around, while he thought about all the possible incidents that could happen during the meeting on Saturday. He prayed that everything would run smoothly, because even a little gathering was

dangerous enough for him. If the police or the GSA would ever catch him, it all would have been in vain.

Two years ago, the young man from Kiev had assumed the leadership of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus*, an patriotic, anti-government organization of Belarusian resistance fighters who wanted to liberate their homeland from the tyranny of the World Government. At that time, he had still lived in Minsk. Meanwhile, the once tiny faction had become a small political factor, because of its restless and effective publicity campaigns.
Many people seemed to have sympathies for the *Rus*, but now the authorities and the GSA followed their traces and would not rest until Tschistokow was in their hands. The enemy knew that he was the leader of the organization and the great hunt for him had already started.
Even television had reported about him several times, in the usual inflammatory way. He had been called a “terrorist” and a “dangerous lunatic”. Furthermore, they had put a bounty on his head, although he just published political pamphlets and had never been violent so far.
If he had to leave his unremarkable apartment by day, he had to creep out like a rabbit, searched by a pack of gundogs.
He did not catch his neighbor`s eyes so far, Artur felt certain. Otherwise, the police had already visited him. The young man shunned the inner city of Vitebsk which was meanwhile cluttered with cameras and eye-ball-scanners.
His older brother and his parents had been arrested a year ago. With this action, they wanted to lure him out of his hiding place, but he was still nowhere to be seen. Perhaps, his family members had already been liquidated, because he had heard nothing from them since months. But to look for his parents and his brother, would have been some kind

of suicide. Because of all this, his hatred had grown enormously, but he still felt helpless. Although an increasing number of Belarusians had barely Globes to live, hated the World Government and became more and more discontent, only a small group of men had joined his organization. Most people were just scared of losing even the rest of their pathetic existence.
The authorities threatened to block the Scanchips of all who supported or joined the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* in secret. In the worst case, helping the *Rus* could even mean imprisonment or execution.
This situation was terrible for everyone involved, and slowly the concerns of the once so creative and fun-loving young man ate him up from inside.
”I cut off, if necessary, to Japan, if I can`t stand this hell anymore”, he said sometimes to himself and felt a little more relieved. But this feeling never lasted long, because the fear in his head was always there, in these sorrowful days.

„Goal!“, screamed Frank Kohlhaas enthusiastically and turned around to his teammates. His best friend and today`s opponent, Alfred Bäumer, looked angrily at him and clenched his teeth.
Frank had humiliated him again with his soccer skills. Now the goalkeeper shot the ball across the field and the match went on.
“Give me that thing!”, Frank heard his teammate Sven shout from the other end of the field and brought the leather with a deliberate kick in the direction of the young man. Header, goal, Alfred landed in the dirt again and cursed.
“Bäumer, even my grandma is faster!”, scoffed a young man of Frank`s team. Alf growled at him and gave the ball an angry kick. The game still lasted for a further hour. Today it was sunny and warm. An ideal day for a football tournament

in the Lithuanian village of Ivas. Finally, Frank Kohlhaas' team could defeat the other three teams from the tiny village and the young men walked off the field with a satisfied grin.
“What was wrong with you today, dude?”, asked Frank the frustrated Bäumer with sardonic undertone.
“No idea! Maybe I just wasn`t fit. Next time, we`ll sweep you from the field, Kohlhaas!”, grudged the giant and kicked against the ball with a silent snarl.
Julia Wilden gave Frank an admiring glance and the young man answered with a broad smile.
“Franky, go on!”, she yelled and made a victory sign.
“I dedicate my last goal to you, fair maiden!”, called Kohlhaas and gave Alf a nudge in the ribs.
“Fuck off!”, whispered Bäumer and sat down on a stool.
It was a wonderful day. Julia was giving Frank all her attention and literally idolized him. Her father, the head of the village community of Ivas, clapped on his back and praised him too. “I didn`t know that you`re such a great dribbler, boy!”
This summer day, full of sports and fun, did Kohlhaas good. Today, he had thought not a second about the horrors of the Japanese war, which had wrapped up his mind so many times in the last months. The policy, the war and everything else seemed to have vanished in the distance. And the young man was glad about it.
”Let`s go to Sven for a drink!”, suggested Alf and gave the impression, as if he had calmed down.
“Good idea, old man!”, said Frank and smiled.
They went back to the village and finally visited Sven who was waiting for them with a beer case. So much fun and relaxation, the two friends had not had since months.

It was Saturday and the meeting was planned for today. The old warehouse, somewhere in the countryside of northern

Belarus, was filled with nearly 200 people who were eagerly waiting for Artur Tschistokow`s speech.
Except for a few abandoned farm houses and large fields, there was nothing around them. The leader of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* looked nervously out the dirty window beside him. Meanwhile, it was 19.00 o`clock and it slowly got darker.
“I hope there are no informers among the people...”, said Tschistokow quietly to himself, breathing heavily, full of worry.
The fear that the police would suddenly approach, tortured Artur since hours. Some of his men stood near the entrance with guns in their hands, willing to defend themselves, if the cops should try to arrest them.
The leader of the group of Minsk, Mikhail, opened the gathering and got thunderous applause. He railed against the Belarusian politicians who served the World Government as administrators of the country. He called them “traitors”, “criminals” and “bloodsuckers”. Things like this, the discontent men who had come to the meeting, wanted to hear. It sounded like music in their ears, in a time when all hope seemed to be lost.
A comrade from Gomel turned to Artur and asked him to begin his speech. The young man walked up some wooden steps and went to an amateurish looking speaker`s desk, his fellows had made for him. The front part of the desk was covered with the flag of the organization.
Tschistokow felt his heart pounding faster, while his comrades started to applaude. A very young boy came to the little stage and said reverently: “I`m proud to meet you personally, Mr. Tschistokow. I have seen a report about you on television!”
The leader of the *Rus* smiled at him and beheld the naive appearing bunch of men in front of him. They looked up to

him like believers to a priest. But what could he really give them?
“Not even a mouse must fear us...”, he muttered to himself. Then he spoke to his followers.
”My dear comrades! I welcome you warmly to this meeting of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus*, our organization, which opposes the ruling system with all its limited resources.
There are some new men and women here today, some unknown faces, I don`t know yet. This is the way it should be. I hope that the coming hours will be peaceful, and no policemen will disturb us.
Today, we are about 200 people in this dilapidated old building. It is no great number, but it is better than nothing. You all risk your heads, when you come to us and join the fight against the exploitative system of global governance. I admire your courage, my comrades. And we will need brave men and women in the coming struggle for freedom.
But what else remains for us in these days? Shall we better continue to keep quiet? Shall we just try to survive by crawling from one bad paid job to the next? Trying not to become one of the homeless, by keeping our mouths shut in front of our masters?
No, this can not be the right way! We must defend ourselves and we will defend ourselves. Last week, the lackeys of the World Government in Minsk have started a new raid against our people. Raising the tax for administration, increasing the prices for electricity, even lower wages for those who still have some kind of work, and so on! They leave us no more air to breathe. They draw the noose tighter and tighter, squeezing the life out of our people. We should remember the old, better times. Times when a farmer could live from his yield, and a worker from what he has earned. Times when we had something like an own culture and were free

men and women. Now we are slaves, and our land goes, slowly but surely, down the drain. Meanwhile, the Russians have just a few children, because it has become to expensive to raise a family.
Today, our young people have to emigrate to other countries to find work at all. Anyone who loses his job and doesn`t find a new one in time, ends as a beggar, becomes homeless – just dies.
In return, this government brings hundreds of thousands of foreigners from Asia and the Orient to our country, in order to get rid of the old Russian population. If you walk through some parts of Minsk, Moghilev, Grodno, Gomel and so on, you no longer believe that you are still on Russian territory. They want to create here a patchwork of different nations, races and cultures, because this patchwork won`t resist them anymore.
We, the Russians, shall die out and disappear, if you listen to the speeches of Medschenko and his bunch of traitors. Television pollutes our minds with lies and all the meaningless entertainment, every day. They want to brainwash our nation and distract us from our misery.
But a small group of people here in Belarus is not poor, not at all! I`m talking about the group of collaborators in Minsk, the group of betrayers. They have a good life by squeezing out their own people! Sub-governor Medschenko is such a tick, and his whole staff of helpers too!"
"This son of a bitch should be hanged!", shouted one of the men through the hall.
"Medschenko and the rest of that traitor scum must be killed! Put them up against the wall!", screamed a young man, raising his fists.
The other people yelled and applauded. These words were like balm for their frustrated souls.

Artur Tschistokow continued and slowly all the fear was falling from him. He seemed to become a giant, speaking with passion and gesticulating wildly.
“We demand that this country shall be independent again. Free from the global system of enslavement! We demand, that this country shall be governed only by Russians who serve their own nation!
This land belongs to the Russians, not the occupiers, the World Government or other foreigners!”, he shouted and his supporters cheered.
Tschistokow banged his fist on the desk and gave his men a determined look, his narrow face quivered with excitement. ”But we should not fool ourselves. Those who oppress us, will continue to serve the exploiters and won`t become reasonable or sensible tomorrow!
They won`t use the few Globes, they can still squeeze out of us, to build new schools, kindergartens or to generate more jobs. No! They will only give us more cameras, more paid informers, and will even call more GCF soldiers to our land, so that we can feed the oppressors with our money!
Furthermore, our country is totally indebted by the “Global Bank Trust”, but there seems to be still enough money to finance this system of surveillance! We can still dwell in the dirt, while they tell us that the coffers of Belarus are empty, but this is a lie! They have money, but not for the people of Belarus. However, for GCF soldiers, for monitoring and for the foreigners who live on social welfare!
“Right!”, yelled an old man, clapping his hands. Others also applauded and nodded at Artur Tschistokow. He continued.
“When I decided, some years ago, to resist the destruction and looting of our fatherland, it was clear that I would soon reach a point of no return. Back then, I swore, I would make this country free and independent and give it back to its rightful owners - and that`s the people of Belarus!

I`m often scared that they find and kill me one day, but we all should not fear our enemies, because we are the fighters for the future of our children!", he called.
"Our movement will not rest until this country is finally free, and our countrymen shall no longer fear hunger and misery. If we die trying, then it shall be. What do we have to lose? I prefer standing in front of you, just for an hour, as a free man, than living a hundred years as a supervised, soulless slave!
And from now on, there will be only one rule of us all: Spread the word! Carry our fight to all parts of Belarus! We have to go to the agency workers in the remaining production centers of our country!
We have to go to the countless, homeless people who have already lost all hope!
We have to go to the families, to tell them about the political goals of our movement!
The people of Belarus are becoming more and more desperate and we need to show them that there are other options, than just being enslaved!
We must bring the good news to the masses, tell them about the coming liberation. Our brothers and sisters out there are waiting for a change, they are waiting for us, my comrades!"
Artur Tschistokows speech still lasted for two hours. He spoke about global policy, the Japanese war of independence, the economy of Belarus - shouting his claims through the meanwhile half-dark hall.
Finally, the young man presented some of his own concepts. He talked about how he wanted to make Belarus free and independent again, how to give the masses work and how the old Russian culture could be reborn.
In the end, he was only content with some parts of his speech, but his followers adopted him with triumphant

cheers and adored him literally. Tschistokow could not deny that he enjoyed this moment and for some minutes he became euphoric. Finally, his supporters besieged him, trying to talk about everything again, praised him.
Shortly afterwards, Artur Tschistokow discussed the next steps with his group leaders. One of them proudly told him that he has even won a high-ranking official of the civil service as a sympathizer. The event which had taken place far away from any nosey eyes in a little village near Vitebsk, ended calmly and all the guests went back home, unnoticed and safe.
The leader of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* finally ordered some further actions and asked his supporters to distribute the newspaper of the organization. Then he sat in Peter`s car for a while and talked with him about his plans to edit new illegal websites, and even to establish an underground radio station, somewhere in Belarus.
Exhausted, but inspired by the encouragement of his men, he returned to Vitebsk in the early morning hours, and disappeared in his drab apartment block for the next days.

It was a dreary evening. Outside it was pouring with rain and the waterdrops pounded relentlessly against the window pane. Frank felt dull and tired, but his mind still refused to sleep.
“29...30...31”, he was counting silently, counting all the men he had killed.
He reckoned up those, he could remember - in Paris, in Sapporo and during the mission in the jungles of Okinawa. Surely he could still add some more, especially since the Japanese war, when he had often fired at shadows in the darkness, never knowing who had been hit by his bullets. Kohlhaas had thrown hand grenades into rooms and

trenches, and had no longer checked, how many people had been torn to pieces by them.
Meanwhile, they called him a “hero”, but he did not feel like one. An awfully big burden of guilt and doubt was lying on his soul. He looked out the window and thought about the great warriors of history, those, who were celebrated and honored as heroes in the memory of posterity. Those men with the magnificent shrines and the great monuments.
”How many people may king Leonidas have slain at Thermopylae?”, he asked himself and looked thoughtfully at the old tree in front of his window. “Has he ever thought of them?”
The young man cursed the world in which he was born into. This world in which he had no other choice, as he assured himself.
”I have always been a happy child. Naive and clueless, but happy. But after a few years, I had to realize, in what cruel age fate has thrown me”, he whispered to himself.
”It`s not your fault, Frank! You would save every little animal, help every poor old lady across the street. That`s you, Frank! A man with a very good core. Nevertheless, you have killed so many people...”
Kohlhaas sat on his bed, breathing heavily and clutching his head. Outside it began to rain harder.

Two years ago, the new tax for administration had already been introduced by the World Government in all sectors, including “Eastern Europe”. At that time, a big wave of discontent had even shaken Belarus.
Today, on 15.04.2033, the TV stations and newspapers had announced that the hated tax was raised again with over 50%, while the media tried to tell the people, that it was necessary - and moreover a “great progress”.

Medschenko promised to use the money to support an “improved Scanchip management”, but the most Belarusians who got more and more problems to get along with their low wages, did not believe him. Therefore, great parts of the population were indignant and ranted in secret.
The strongly indebted sub-sector “Belarus-Baltic” tried to fill up its empty coffers with this new measure, because the “Global Bank Trust”, the international financial authority, put it increasingly under pressure. Meanwhile, many Belarusians knew about this and called the tax for administration “another brazen raid”.
The media claimed, however, that more officials were neccessary to ensure a better service and a faster processing of Scanchip matters. Nevertheless, many people of Belarus knew that the Scanchips were almost exclusively managed by automated computer systems. Furthermore, the bankrupt sub-sector had no money to hire new officials at all.
But what the people thought, was not important in the eyes of Medschenko and his staff. From 04.15.2033, every citizen had to pay further 57,99 Globes a month now – for the new “fake tax”!
Nobody could do anything against this deception, because the World Government had decided and the rest had to obey...

Making Contact

“The displeasure is boiling at every street corner!”, said Artur with a sardonic undertone, staring at his eight comrades who had met him in Gorodok.
“Yes, that`s right. If you hear people talking, you could think that they will soon go on the streets to protest”, replied one of the men.
“People talk a lot today, and tomorrow they are lethargic again”, moaned Peter Ulljewski, Artur`s loyal follower.
”But I think, we will become even more popular for many Belarusians. Now we have to improve the structure of our organization and a public campaign has to be started!”, said Tschistokow and folded his arms across the chest.
“You wanted to show us your new “cell system” today, right?”, remarked Igor from Orcha.
”Yes, I will! In the last weeks, I have brooded a lot about the question, how we can make our movement more effective and safer. Let me tell you my ideas.
We found sub-groups in every important region of Belarus which can operate independently from each other, with only one single leader, who is moreover the contact person. This man will be the only one who has contact to the other groups from outside and to the command. Furthermore, this leader has the only authoritiy and the right to give orders, and he will be the one who gets instructions from the command or directly from me. I will choose the leaders of the local groups in the next days.
Apart from this, we can concert actions in secret forums or on our own websites. Anyhow, we will organize our men only in local groups and cells – from now on!”

Peter took a laptop out of his bag and put it on the table. Artur told more details and his comrades seemed to be pleased concerning his plans.
The blond man added: “We have to avoid the mistake to allow any so called “democratic structures” in our organization. This would just be the thing, our enemies are waiting for. No! The movement will be build up with a strict military hierarchy – like a revolutionary army.”
“So if cell or group “X” in city “Y” is uncovered and smashed by the police, the authrorities will have much more problems to finde traces to the rest of the organization”, remarked Peter and scratched his belly.
Dimitri, a 20 years old man from Slonim said: “If we really build up such a big movement, the cops will try to infiltrate our groups with informers.”
“Who is spying for the cops and gets caught by us, gets a bullet in his head!”, hissed Tschistokow. “We have to become tougher. In the last weeks and months, the police had got some internal informations, what can only be explained with spies in our ranks. Now it is necessary to keep a sharp eye on our own people. Informers who tell the authorities things for a few Globes, endanger our lives and we will show no mercy with them.”
The other men nodded and Artur Tschistokow stroked through his blond hair. Then he grinned and continued with the presentation of the new organizational structure. ”All members of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* will have to swear by their lives, that they keep silence!”
“And I will ensure that all *Rus* will stick to these rules, Artur!”, growled Peter and clenched his fists.
“What`s about weapons?”, asked one of the men now.
“It`s all in progress. However, I still see no reason to use violence – so far. We will only use it, if the cops openly attack our comrades. Otherwise, we continue to make

effective publicity campaigns. We are no guerillas, but want to become a political mass movement one day", preached Tschistokow with a clear vision.
"Well, all right. In the coming days, we will begin with effective campaigns from north to south and across the whole country. The last event has inspired me, we are on the right way!", said the rebel leader to his followers.
His men murmured their approval and the young leader gave instructions for further actions in the bigger cities. They still talked for a while and Artur`s fellows really seemed to believe that their small group could start something like a revolution one day. But Tschistokow, who outwardly looked so determined and strong, had a lot of doubts concerning his political underground struggle. If he was honest to himself, this all was just ridiculous. But what should he do? He had no other choice than going on tilting at windmills.

"Ha! Great!", Thorsten Wilden slapped his thighs and laughed. He almost fell out of his chair.
"Okay, who can read this?", he asked the others.
Frank tried to decipher some Cyrillic letters on the screen: "Attention, citizens! This newspaper...eh...the paper..."
"Attention, citizens! This newspaper is lying to you!", exclaimed Wilden, laughing again.
"True words!", muttered Alfred Bäumer and sipped his beer.
Wilden was amusing himself magnificently. The three men sat in his living room and watched the news on Belarusian television. During last night, some strangers had decorated the white facade of the editorial building of the "Belorusskaya News Gazeta" in Minsk with a few antigovernmental slogans in huge, blood-red letters. Employees of the newspaper hastily tried to whitewash the

unpleasant messages, while an excited reporter was talking with a squeaky voice.
“Terrorists? This reporter has said “terrorists”! That stupid bitch! Ridiculous! Only because they have smeared a wall, they are terrorists now!”, ranted the village boss.
“They talk about this guy again, this...eh...Artur Tschistokow. Can you translate it, Thorsten?, asked Frank.
The former businessman with the gray temples perked his eyebrows up and tried to follow the rapid chatter of the reporter.
Shortly afterwards he said: “The police suspects some members of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* from Minsk. But they investigate in all directions.”
”Ha, ha!”, shouted Alf, scratching his dark beard and fetched another beer out of the fridge.
After the reporter had finished her speech, the police chief of Minsk was interviewed. He admitted, with an embarrassed face, that his men did not have a “hot trace” so far. Then the news showed a huge banner which strangers had attached on a motorway bridge. It was removed by some policemen.
“For an independent Belarus! Medschenko = Exploiter of the workers!”, was the text on the banner. This pleased the three rebels from Lithuania and they started to discuss excitedly.
“A lot has changed in the last few months. Here in Lithuania and in Belarus, many people are more than dissatisfied. Thousands of them fume with rage. When I was in Vilnius, three weeks ago, I have noticed the increase of anger when I have talked to some citizens. Raising the tax for administration is another slap in the face of the people”, said Thorsten Wilden and raised his forefinger like an university lecturer.

”Yes, a look at our Scanchip accounts tells everything, although they are just fake stuff and we luckily don`t have to work for our money. Thank HOK!”, remarked Frank.
“Meanwhile, the situation really seems to become desolate. Belarus is still poorer than I have already expected it. I`m curious to see, when the first riots will breake out”, came from Bäumer, who appeared a bit tipsy now.
“Riots? You can`t foresee such things, Alf!”, answered Wilden. “However, I like the organization of this Artur Tschistokow. In the last days, the media have almost daily reported about the actions of these *Rus*.”
”We should try to make contact with them. Maybe we can work together”, suggested Frank.
”Hmmm?”, muttered Wilden thoughtfully. “We could do it. Nevertheless, it is very dangerous. We just don`t know these people and I don`t want some GSA agents running through our village tomorrow.”
“I just thought...”, returned Kohlhaas.
“If we would really contact them, for example on the Internet, we should do it together with HOK, because he knows the necessary security measures”, answered the village boss and also took another beer.
“Well, I`m interested in this group too”, said Alf with a grin.
“Damn! Just be careful! This can make us a lot of problems, boys. Let`s ask HOK”, meant the former businessman with a serious look.

Three days later, in the last week of April, Frank and Alfred went to HOK, the computer specialist of Ivas. It was noon when they knocked on the door of the dilapidated house, in which the talented computer scientist resided, and it took a while until they heard signs of life from the hallway.
“Who`s there?”, it resounded through the front door.

“It`s us! Frank and Alf. Hurry up, buddy!”, called Kohlhaas and pounded against a shutter.
”Hach! Calm down, guys!”, heard the two visitors. Then the door opened with a faint creak.
“What's going on, HOK? You have dark circles under your eyes. What happened?”, quipped Alf.
The plump computer expert yawned and blinked at the two men.
”Oh, nothing! Yesterday, I just have been in front of the computer screen, for some hours. Can I help you?”, huffed HOK.
“May we come in?”, asked Frank demandingly.
”Oh, yes! Sure!”, muttered the computer expert and went into the house.
Frank and Alf followed him. After a brief stay in the kitchen and a few cups of coffee, HOK accompanied them to his office which was traditionally cluttered with all kinds of stuff and numerous boxes. In the middle of the room was a table with a big computer on it. The two guests told HOK their wishes and the wayward man sullenly promised to help them.
“Okay, but I must eat something at first!”, growled the fat guy and went into his kitchen, while the hum of the computer became louder.
A few minutes later, HOK jumped into the sea of datas, swimming like a happy fish from one illegal website to the next. The world of cyberspace was his element, and once he had entered it, he quickly felt well again.
“Look at this! Here they are!”, whispered the freak, after he had found the website of the freedom movement.
A white flag with a black dragon's head appeared on the screen and the slogan “Freedom for Belarus!” lit up in big letters. Now, HOK`s fingers danced with breathtaking speed over the keyboard. Frank and Alfred were amazed.

„Contact…register…login“, he whispered.
HOK registered at the Russian website and explained: “I log in from Korea, he, he!”
“Have fun, buddy!“, remarked Frank, perking his dark eyebrows up. Bäumer just grinned.
„Send message!“, said HOK silently to himself and a second later, the email was on its way.

„Hello,
We are a political group from Lithuania that also fights against the World Government. Please answer us, so that we can arrange a meeting.”

„Okay, now we`ll wait…“, spoke Kohlhaas.
“Very good, HOK! Thank you!”, said Alf. “We will only communicate with this organization from your computer, everything else would be a too high risk.”
”Security on the Internet and elsewhere in the vastness of cyberspace is uncle HOK`s specialty!”
The portly man smiled proudly and turned the computer off.
”We go now. Call us, if you have received an answer”, Frank told him. Finally, he and Alf left the house.
”Yes, all right!”, gasped HOK, shuffled into the kitchen, ate some bread and read a thick book full of science fiction stories which he had ordered on the Internet, for the rest of the day.

The prospect to meet some rebels from the neighboring regions and the thought of working together, spurred Frank and Alf to learn some more English and Russian. For things like this, there was only one truly competent partner in Ivas, Thorsten Wilden, the village boss. On the next day, Kohlhaas got up early and immediately went to Wilden`s house. In addition, there was also Thorsten`s daughter

Julia, who Frank wanted to invite for dinner in the next days. Actually, she was even a more important reason to show up at the Wildens. The leader of the rebel base was proud that his extensive language skills were on demand once more, and immediately started to teach Frank in Russian. After the lesson, they talked for a while.
“I'm not sure, perhaps these *Rus* are just a bunch of idiots”, said Wilden.
“Well, I don`t think so. We`ll see whether there is a response to our email. What`s the worst that could happen?”, returned Kohlhaas.
“Anyhow, let`s wait and see”, said the village boss and waved his young friend nearer. “Have I already shown you my new library, Frank?”
The young man shook his head and followed Wilden into an adjoining room which had obviously been renovated only a few weeks ago. Large bookcases were everywhere around him. The gray-haired man rummaged in some boxes that were stuffed with books to the brim, and put a few more titles to the others.
“Not bad!”, said Frank, still surprised, and gaped. He had never seen so many books in his whole life, because people of his generation did not read very much anymore.
”If you want to borrow something, you just need to come and ask”, spoke the village boss. “The books are even ordered by topic. History, politics, economics and so on...”
”That`s exactly the right thing for the cold winter months in Ivas. I will remember your offer. However, when it gets dark that early, I sleep worse”, told Frank.
”Oh? Really?”, asked Wilden and was puzzled.
”Yes!”, returned his young pupil. “I think, it`s probably the aftereffect of my captivity in that holo cell. Nightmares, sleep disturbances – all that kind of stuff.”

The head of Ivas looked around quizzically. Now he had no longer an appropriate answer.
“You will survive it, my boy!”, he just said.
“Where is Julia?”, asked Kohlhaas then.
“Probably in the living room, with her mother. I have been in the office or in the library all day”, explained Wilden.
”Well, see you tomorrow!”, replied Frank, turned around and went downstairs to find Julia.
The young man smiled and cleared his throat, as the blonde woman came towards him.
”Hi, Frank! I can`t believe it – my father has let you go”, joked Julia with an astonished look.
”So to speak! He really has a beautiful book realm!”, said Kohlhaas, searching desperately for a good topic to talk about.
”Yes, Mom and me see him even more rarely now”, muttered Julia.
”I can imagine. Eh, I must go back home, Alf is waiting. We have to repair something. I just wanted to ask if you would visit me for lunch?”, remarked Kohlhaas.
”Sure! Why not? Nice idea! And when?”
The young man hesitated, while Julia looked at him with an expectant look, starting to grin. ”On Tuesday. Towards evening. I will cook something...”
“Something?”
“Eh, yes...”
“Okay! I will come at 19.00 o`clock!“, answered the daughter of the village boss with amusement and seemed to enjoy Frank`s nonplus. Kohlhaas left the house and was glad, that his beloved had accepted the invitation.

On the following day, Frank and Alfred visited HOK again. The email had been answered by a “Sergei”. Presumably, this was not his real name. A little later, they went to Wilden

with the printed out message. The village boss fetched a Russian dictionary from the bookshelf and prepared himself to translate the short text. Finally, he read aloud, while his younger friends listened eagerly.

“Thank you for your message!
We are pleased that you are interested in the *Freedom Movement of the Rus.* Before we can meet, we ask you for a telephone call. Please call 0131/4458930.

Greetings

Sergej“

A short silence followed and Wilden scratched his grizzled head - brooding. His guests looked at him quizzically.
“Well, can you establish an untraceable and secure telephone connection for us, HOK?”, asked the village boss the computer scientist.
“Of course! This is my standard program!”, replied the computer freak. “Just follow me!”
They went to the stocky man`s house and sat down in his office. Wilden grabbed the phone, because his Russian was the best – by far. HOK switched on the speaker.
For half a minute a monotonous hooting echoed through the untidy room, then they heard a voice at the other end of the line.
Wilden immediately started talking at breakneck speed and the two interlocutors exchanged their opinions about some basic things. The village boss did not tell the man at the other end, from where he was calling. After half an hour, they had finally arranged a meeting on 02.05.2033 in Vitebsk. The stranger asked Wilden to call him again in two days to get further informations. Then the conversation

ended. Wilden briefly summarized the content of the call for the others and looked expectantly at them.
“And? What do you think?”, he wanted to know from his fellows.
”Sounds good, Thorsten! I think, it would make sense to look for some allies in the neighboring regions. Belarus is not far away from us”, said Alf.
”Maybe you`re right, but I`m still a little undecided. The name of our village must remain a secret! A top secret, got it?”, stressed Wilden with a straight face.
“Yes! Sure!”, answered Frank sullenly.
”Who of us will go to the meeting?”, asked HOK and gazed at his guests.
“I will go! No question!”, meant Wilden.
“Yes, and the whole thing is interesting for us too. After all, we`re not here for fun”, said Bäumer to Frank and nodded at him.
“Okay, I also want to meet those Russians”, remarked Kohlhaas.
“Then we have to wait until they tell us more details”, said Wilden. “This guy on the phone seemed to be all right – just a frist impression...”
Shortly afterwards, the men left HOK`s house and went back home. Frank and Alfred were full of expectation, hoping that the meeting, if it would really take place, would not disappoint them.
“I just hope that these guys are not a group of teenage pseudo-revolutionaries”, commented Frank at dinner.
“I don`t think so, because the reports about them on television were very encouraging”, returned Alfred. “Finally we will see what happens. If they are idiots, we just walk off and they never see us again.”

The next days passed fastly. Today it was Frank`s task to present Julia the promised dinner and the young man had to show himself from his best side. Moreover, he had finally decided to win her heart, although he was no expert for “women`s stuff” and love was still an unknown territory for him. Nevertheless, Frank tried everything to please his beautiful, female guest. He had cooked spaghetti and presented them his beloved with a big smile.
”Ah, that looks delicious!”, said Julia and seemed to look forward to her meal.
Frank took a true mountain of noodles from the steaming pot in the middle of the table and looked shyly at the blonde woman.
”Does it taste good?”, he asked a few minutes later.
”Yes, really. Very tasty!” Julia grinned.
Now Frank filled his plate with noodles too, and immediately started to smack. Shortly afterwards he noticed his loud smacking and cleared his throat. Julia just smiled.
”We can go to Raseiniai, if you like. It is not far from here. Eh, there is a cinema”, suggested Frank.
“You`re welcome. The main point is that we get out of this boring village. Yes, a good idea. Do you want to watch a specific movie?”, she asked.
”Uh...well...yes...don`t know. Any film is okay. There is a new film called “The Slayer – Angel of Death”...seems to be interesting...”, murmured Kohlhaas.
”What`s that for a movie?”
“Eh, nothing, forget it. Maybe this film is nothing for you. We should watch another movie, Julia”, diverted Frank.
“Sounds like some kind of horror film...”
“Well, probably a bit of horror...”
“I don`t like these movies, Frank! Let`s watch something else”, said the blonde.

“Okay!”
"Where is Alf tonight?”, she finally asked.
Frank pondered. “He is in Steffen de Vries` cafe, together with Sven. I think, they want to play skat.”
“Can I have a bit more salt, Franky?”
“Yes, of course!”
Kohlhaas jumped up immediately and hurried to the cupboard. Then he desperately looked for the small salt jar.
”Wait! It must be somewhere here...”, he muttered quietly.
Julia opened her beautiful eyes and giggled. “Yeah, all right! Don`t panic! It`s not that important...”
“Damn! It is Alf`s fault that I can`t find this stupid salt jar. That idiot!”, growled Frank silently and came back to the kitchen table.
They chatted for a while and he enjoyed the nice evening with Julia. She apparently liked his spaghetti – more or less. A few days later, they drove to the cinema in Raseiniai and watched a “weepie”, as Frank called it. But the content of the movie interested the young rebel not very much. The main point was, that Julia was sitting next to him. From time to time, he looked at the blonde woman with a hasty glance, admiring her beauty. After the film, she gave him a farewell kiss on the cheek and Frank walked back home with a happy smile and even dreamed of her in this night.

Artur Tschistokow stared at the screen of his laptop, which illuminated the otherwise dark room a little bit.
”Group from Lithuania? Thus...”, he muttered, narrowing his eyes to slits.
“What do you think, Peter?”
“I`ve never heard of such a group. Sounds strange!”, replied his friend suspiciously.

”We have had so many new members in the last months, but an entire group has never made contact to us before”, said Tschistokow quietly.
“Do you really want to meet them? Maybe it`s a trap!”
”What`s the worst that could happen? Yes, perhaps it is a trap - or not. We are always in danger of being trapped.”
Peter took a deep breath and seemed to be not very enthusiastic. Then the strong man with the reddish-blond hair answered: “But most of the new ones come to us after they have been recruited by men we already know. This thing is much more different, Artur!”
”I know that too. But I think, we should risk it. We need many more supporters, otherwise the movment will always crawl around on our current level.”
“Okay, then let us meet this “group”. But I will come with you – and some armed men too!”
”No, you`ll lead the movement in my place, if it is a trap and they catch me! Got it?”, hissed Tschistokow.
”Don`t say such things...”, muttered Peter testily.
”One of them has called me yesterday, and we have chosen a meeting place, I will tell him now, that we confirm!”
A minute later, the leader of the underground group sent HOK a short email and finally informed the recipient that he was definitely willing to meet them. Then the rebel from Vitebsk turned around and stared at his longtime companion.
”You know, old boy, we are following a path that will bring us either victory or death one day. They can catch us every day. I don`t want to lead a small group of malcontents. I want to build up a revolutionary mass movement.
We have big plans, and have to reach the workers in the factories, the officials and even the sane policemen. If we want to do this, the eternal game of hide and seek will become more and more difficult anyway. Let`s hope that the

social situation in this country will bring us the chaos we need. This is our only chance to succeed."
Artur`s best friend puffed quietly and twisted his mouth. He did not give an answer and stared vacantly into space. Tschistokow was right, and Peter Ulljewski knew it.

Conspirative Meeting

Frank Kohlhaas, Alfred Bäumer, Thorsten Wilden and two other men from Ivas were waiting on a secluded parking lot. Meanwhile, it was 22.00 o`clock and it was getting dark. They had driven to the outskirts of Vitebsk in the northwest of Belarus, and had parked their car next to an vacant building. The men peered across a long road which led directly to the parking lot.
”Well, it`s 22.00 o`clock now – these guys are not punctual”, growled Wilden, staring at his digital watch.
“I just hope that the are okay, that`s the main thing”, said Alfred.
Martin Steinbacher, one of the two young men who had accompanied them as an escort, gasped nervously and moaned.
”Stay calm!”, whispered Frank, looking at him and fumbling for his gun which was in the pocket of his coat. “It must be them!”
From a distance, they saw the headlights of a car flashing in the night. Someone was driving in the direction of the meeting place.
”Ah!”, said Wilden and seemed to become fraught.
The vehicle came nearer with a quiet hum. It also seemed to transport five men, whose outlines could be recognized behind the car`s windows. Then it finally stopped and a tall, blond man with a long gray trench coat got out first. Four other men followed him, looking grimly around. They were dressed completely in black.
The blond man, Artur Tschistokow, came to Wilden, after he had correctly identified him as the leader of the five strangers, and shook his hand.

”Menja sawut Artur Tschistokow”, he said with a smile.
”Priwjet, Thorsten Wilden!”, answered the village boss and looked friendly at the Russian.
“Could we speak English, Mr. Tschistokow?”, asked Wilden and nodded.
Meanwhile, the other men had come closer and introduced themselves too. Frank and Alf had calmed down and welcomed them.
“Speak English? Yes, all right!”
“Thank you, Mr. Tschistokow!”, said Wilden, while the blond Russian suddenly grinned.
“Tij njemez?”, he asked then.
“Da, ja njemez!”, replied the village boss, grinning too.
“Choroschow! Then I will try to speak in German!”, returned the leader of the freedom movement and perked his eyebrows up.
“Good! I`m pleased. You can speak German, Mr. Tschistokow! I haven`t expected that”, remarked Wilden and was amazed.
“I can talk a little bit. It will be enough to conversation!”
Wilden seemed to like his new interlocutor and started to laugh loudly. Artur`s comrades were just silent and stood behind him like statues.
“Why have you learned German?”, asked the head of Ivas.
”Well, I`m a big friend of the German culture. Then I have learned as a hobby German language”, explained Tschistokow and gave Wilden a wink.
“I`m sorry, that I must meet you at such a place, but it is because of...safe...Understand?”
„Safety!“, said Frank.
„Yes, because of safety!“, added the blond man, smiling at Kohlhaas.
The conversation lasted almost two hours and soon it was dark. Finally, only the headlights of the cars gave the ten

men some orientation. The rebels from Ivas and their new acquaintances from Belarus were on very good terms with each other and had similiar political ideologies. Wilden showed his great world knowledge and was quite amazed, that Artur Tschistokow could answer him on the same level, despite all language difficulties. Deep in the night, the men said goodbye to each other and drove back home.
“We will stay in contact. I`m looking forward to join forces with you!”, said Wilden euphorically and clapped on Tschistokow's back. Then they disappeared.

On the trip home, the village boss was effusive and seemed to have found his old zest.
“Tell me, what you think about him?”, he asked the others.
“He seems to be a honest man!”, said Frank.
“And he knows about the backgrounds of world policy. This is important today”, remarked Alf.
The two younger men from Ivas just nodded and remained silent.
“In Lithuania, there are also some members of Tschistokow`s organization. We will immediately get in touch with them. This would be great, right?”, said the village boss.
“But we won`t exactly tell them, where we come from. Even this Tschistokow must not know our home village. You always tell us to keep our mouths shut, Thorsten. And secrecy is the most important thing of all!”, replied Frank, trying to cool down Wilden again.
”Yes, yes! Of course! We tell them nothing. But I`m just glad to have such an organization in the proximity of Ivas. We can achieve a lot, if we fight together with Tschistokow and his men!”
“What doesn`t mean that we become blabbers!”, growled Alf and Kohlhaas agreed.

They drove through the night and reached their home village in the early morning hours. Frank and Alfred sneaked home and immediately went to bed. This day had been exhausting, and now they had to wait and see, what would happen next. Wilden visited HOK several times in the next days, and used his well-encrypted phone connection for long conversations with Artur Tschistokow. The young Russian with his resolute character and the amazing world knowledge had already fascinated him, and while Frank and Alfred worked in the garden or renovated their old house, the village boss just invited his new acquaintances from Belarus – to Ivas!
Wilden had not talked about this with the other villagers and had acted on his own. Soon, Artur Tschistokow was on his way to the little Lithuanian village.

“What?”, screamed Frank with darting eyes and winced, almost falling from his chair.
”He comes to Ivas?”, ranted Alf and banged on the kitchen table.
The village boss made a step back. “Oh, don`t lose your heads. My guts tells me, that Artur Tschistokow has a pure heart. I can`t imagine that he is an informer.”
“You can`t imagine? Fuck!”, shouted Kohlhaas and briefly thought about smashing Wilden`s face.
”Ivas is a fucking taboo! You have spent years in building up this community, Thorsten. And now, you want to endanger us all just to show those fucking Russians your damn books?”, roared Bäumer.
“I will take the full responsibility. Eh...Artur also wants to bring three of his men from Vilnius. For example, the leader of the Lithuaninan section...”, explained Wilden slowly and became more and more insecure.

“The full fucking responsibility? We won`t have anything from this if the cops come here tomorrow, idiot!”, hissed Frank in anger. Then he left the room.
“You bring the hangman to our village. Have you forgotten that the GSA is searching for that Russian?”, yelled Alf, standing menacingly in front of the village boss.
“Well, I`m going back home now. Don`t worry, nothing will happen”, muttered Wilden and seemed to be offended.
“Damn! Think about your responsibility for all the inhabitants of Ivas, Thorsten!”, grouched Frank after him from the living room.
For the rest of the day, Frank and Alfred sweared and cursed, because of Wilden`s recklessness and his eternal quest for self-glorification. They knew that this could lead to a catastrophe.

However, Artur`s visit could not be prevented anymore. The Russian came to Ivas, with three other men. Even Igor, a dark-haired, tall man with a beard in the mid thirties, who was introduced to them as the leader of the Vilnius group, was among them.
Wilden led his guests through the whole village and spoke smugly about “his base”. Finally he started endless discussions with Tschistokow, showing him proudly some of “his men” and already warranted an intensive cooperation in the name of the other rebels. Frank and Alfred angrily followed the older gentleman, seething inside like two glowing pots.
“This damn monkey!", thought Kohlhaas and pierced his eyes in Wilden`s back. The gray-haired man walked forward and led the Belarusian visitors to his house.
”My garden! It`s nice, isn`t it?”, he said with a happy face. Now, Mrs. Wilden and Julia appeared at the front door.

“Artur Tschistokow from Vitebsk and Igor from Vilnius and...”, he explained.
“Anatoly and Leonid!”, added the blond man, friendly shaking Mrs. Wilden`s and her daughter`s hands and bowing to them.
Julia stared at Frank with an annoyed glance and rolled her eyes irately.
“If a donkey feels too well, he starts running on ice!”*, whispered Frank to her in passing and she nodded.
Obviously, Wilden's wife and his daughter were also not all too pleased by the generous invitation of foreign people into their house. Anyway, it had happened. The former businessman from Westphalia led them all into the kitchen, where a steaming soup and a big cream cake were already waiting for the guests.
They ate in silence. Only Wilden and Artur Tschistokow talked cheerfully, showing each other how much political background knowledge they had. A while later, they left Mrs. Wilden and Julia and went into Thorsten`s new library, where the landlord presented Artur his favorite books. ”This is incredible. These books are more than rare!”, marveled Tschistokow and browsed in an old tome. “I have the same book, only in Russian.”
Wilden and the leader of the *Rus* talked for a while about their collections of literature, then Frank finally stepped in and asked: “Okay, now tell us about your great revolutionary plans, Artur?”
The blond Russian turned around and looked for a suitable answer.
”We have to...eh...one day...make a strike by the workers and make a revolution in Minsk!”, he returned.

* Old German proverb

“Do you have weapons? Guns? Rifles?”, questioned Frank, staring at Tschistokow.
“Not so many...”, replied the young dissident.
“Not so many?”, aped Kohlhaas. “If we work together with your organization, we want to have a perspective!”,
“Yes, you can help us in Lithuania”, answered Tschistokow.
“This may be the next step...”, grumbled Wilden who still wanted to show his guests some more of his books.
“Next step? Forget it! You are here and you know our village, Artur. Now, we will work together and I just want to know how!”, said Frank.
Artur and his comrades looked around, apparently irritated by the angry atmosphere. For a short moment, there was silence in the library.
Tschistokow was disturbed and stared at the ceiling. ”Now tell us about the situation in Belarus, Artur! Is it even realistic that there will ever be an uprising? Are the people really that poor and discontent?”, asked Kohlhaas.
“Yes, it is getting worse. Fewer and fewer people have no more money, understand?”, said the tall man in the trenchcoat. “In Russia are still more poor people!”
“Meanwhile, most people are poor, but nevertheless, they wouldn`t start a revolution!”, remarked Alfred sardonically.
”You have a few hundred men, right?”, commented Frank while Artur was browsing his dictionary.
“Yes, hundreds of men. In Russia, in Ukraine and in Baltic countries are members of my group”, returned Tschistokow and slowly seemed to become angry, because of Frank`s doubts concerning the chances of his revolutionary movement.
”You want to take over the power in Belarus? With a few hundred men?”, joked Kohlhaas and grinned cynically.
Artur Tschistokow gave him back a piercing look and snarled quietly.

“Yes, maybe...someday...I do not know what is in the future!”, he replied, shaking his head.
”Do you have supporters among the Belarusian policemen and the officials? Or even in the administration?”
“Yes, but not so many...”
Wilden`s patience snapped: “This is a first meeting. We will talk about these things...”
Frank interrupted him. “No! We talk about it now, Thorsten! You have brought them to Ivas, without asking the rest of us! This was a mortal sin! You have told everyone to keep the mouth shut and now you have been the first one, who has broken this iron rule. Your own rule!”, scolded Bäumer.
”You have called these Russians. Now they are here, in our village! And now I want our new rebel friends to tell us about their great plans to take over Belarus!”, added Frank angrily.
Wilden gasped and apparently felt a bit ashamed. His Russian guests were silent and looked around in embarrassment.
“Well, then we want to make plans for political work”, muttered Tschistokow. “If you help us, I am very happy!”
“All right! We go to my office to talk about some things”, grumbled the village boss and waved the rest nearer.
They went upstairs and sat down in Wilden's study. Frank immediately began to ask the rebel leader from Vitebsk further questions. Finally, they deliberated till the early morning hours. Then the guests went back home.

Frank Kohlhaas could hardly sleep for the rest of the night. Questions and concerns still bored deep inside his mind. Wilden had acted more than imprudent and had endangered the entire community of Ivas. But a spoken out secret could not be catched anymore, to lock it up again in a cage. This was a fact. However, the village boss had agreed to support the small gazette of Tschistokow`s political

movement with a donation, so that the *Rus* could increase its circulation. Frank had urged the Russians to build up an armed group of members, as some kind of security guard. Furthermore, the *Rus* should infiltrate production complexes, in order to organize strikes one day.
Tschistokow agreed and promised Frank to work on all this. For the next weeks, the Russians had planned to spread their propaganda in some bigger cities of Belarus, even in Minsk. The distribution of newspapers and leaflets on a large scale, should be done by the younger members of the organization.
Frank and Alfred, who had already fought in the Japanese war and had killed the governor of “Central Europe”, told Artur, that they would stay away from such “childish” actions. Moreover, there was a too high risk for them to be caught by the police if they walked around, spreading illegal pamphlets. Wilden promised, however, to recruit some young people in the village to distribute Artur`s propaganda material.
Apart from that, the village boss used the following days to re-establish several old contacts with some like-minded business partners and colleagues from his earlier days as an entrepreneur. These men should support him with some donations. And the results of his efforts were impressive. He “organized” several thousand Globes in only a few days. Frank, Alfred and Tschistokow were stunned. About a dozen young men from Ivas finally joined the freedom movement and Wilden`s persuasiveness was once again successful.
Sven, the young man, who had returned with severe mutilations from Japan in the last year, led the group and seemed to be glad to have a new task which let him forget his constant depressions.

In the following weeks, the young activists from Ivas were “on duty” in the north of Belarus, where they spreaded immense quantities of propaganda material in the rural areas. The result was a hysterical outcry of the Belarusian media which reacted with hate and slander on Tschistokow`s newest “propaganda crime”.
The heavily understaffed police in these regions did not came all too often to the sleepy villages and small towns near the northern boder. Aside from that, the newspapers and pamphlets were distributed by night, so the rebels hardly saw any cops on the dark streets of the small villages. This first action lasted until July 2033. Then Tschistokow visited Wilden and the others again. This time, his longest and best friend, Peter Ulljewski, accompanied him to Ivas.

“We are planning a rally on 25th July with about 1000 men”, said the leader of the *Rus*. “In Nowopolozk, near a factory! We are preparing it since one week!”
Wilden cleared his throat. “A rally? A march through Nowopolozk? Are you insane?”
”Insane?”, asked Tschistokow and scratched his head.
”Insane! Crazy!”, answered Alf, tapping his forehead at the Russian.
“Ah, yes! No, I`m not crazy. In Nowopolozk we have many members and the citizens there are very angry against the government. There are many factories that make machinery, and chemical plants, and there are also other factories. Most factories will be closed at the end of the year and many citizens will not have to work any longer. The factory is going to Africa, where workers are cheaper to pay. Do you understand?”
“I don`t know this city at all. However, I`ve heard that there are some large industrial centers. Maybe the largest in

whole Belarus", said Wilden, looking at the other young men from Ivas who had gathered in his living room.
"In Nowopolozk all people are angry and very poor. If the factories are closed, many people have no more Globes to live no longer", said the Russian. His friend Peter nodded and continued to stare at the wall.
"But you can`t simply march through the streets. What`s about the police?", asked Frank incredulously.
"The police has only one station in the city. There are not many police officers in Nowopolozk!"
Now Sven intervened, vehemently refusing Artur`s crazy plan and trying to calm the others. But the leader of the *Rus* remained stubborn and said: "If we make the demonstration, television and the newspapers will report about us. It will be on TV in whole Russia, you understand?"
Frank laughed scornfully. "Something like this is nothing but madness! It will end in a disaster!"
Meanwhile, Wilden`s eyes were shining and he seemed to have a fancy for Tschistokow`s idea. Apparently, he was under the spell of the young rebel. The Russian finally continued with further details of his plan. The rally should last only one hour, then his supporters should leave the city and disappear on their own. Shortly afterwards, Peter Ulljewski explained that they would come to Nowopolozk with a few armed men, if more police officers showed up than expected. This all sounded like political frenzy.
After two hours, Frank and Alfred went home, shaking their heads and leaving Tschistokow alone with the village boss and the others. They just had enough of the crazy ideas of the Russian and promised each other to stay away from all this – in any case!
"Do not think that the cops let Artur and his men just walk through the city. He is nuts!", said Kohlhaas on the way home.

”Yes, certainly this city in northern Belarus is no fortress of state authority, but I don`t believe that we can make our enemies look like fools that easy. It all will end in riots, with deads and casualties. I don`t want to waste my health for such a nonsense”, answered Alf and rubbed his dark beard, still brooding.
”Sure! But it seems, that Artur wants to attract attention at any cost. He doesn`t care about his own life and even of the lifes of his men. Well, I should not say something. I have been not much different from him – some time ago. He is a real freak”, remarked Kohlhaas.
“Of that there is no doubt. This Russian is a true fanatic. Just like you, Frank!”, returned Alf and trudged towards the house.
”If you say so, dude! Anyhow, we will stay away from Artur`s death rally, okay?”
“I don`t intend to participate in it. Tschistokow`s freedom movement is still far too weak for such a provocative show of force.”
The two men went into the house and talked till the evening. Kohlhaas was once more excited because of Wilden`s carelessness and Alf had to prove him right. But the village boss had already planned another surprise for them.

Two days later, Wilden convened a meeting of all the villagers in a big old barn. Some men and women were still angry, because of his behaviour, and boycotted Wilden`s showmanship by staying at home. Finally he had announced, that all young men had to go to the rally in Nowopolozk. Furthermore, he had already made an agreement with Tschistokow, as he gruffly explained, and demanded that everybody should follow his orders without asking. Shortly afterwards, a minor riot broke out among the villagers.

“Who do you think you are, Mr. Wilden? You have just brought strangers to Ivas, what has been more than careless!”, screamed an elderly woman through the barn.
“She is right! Suddely some unfamiliar faces walked around here, and no one of us knew who these guys were. Have you lost your mind?”, added a bearded man.
John Thorphy, the Irishman, was fuming with rage and stood shortly before going for Wilden`s throat: “You have said, no one shall know anything about Ivas. And now - this shit!”
Frank and Alfred nodded, mumbling to themselves and whispering to the other villagers. The leader and founder of the community of Ivas was now confronted with the discontent of his fellows and became more and more uncertain. He had not expected so much anger.
“First, you send my son to that damn war in Japan, and now you let these Russians into our village”, he heard a stout woman shouting from the side.
“I have not sent your son to the front! He has volunteered, Mrs. Müller!”, he barked back angrily.
”Yes! You have, Wilden!”
”Quiet, everybody! You can trust me. Have I ever deliberately endangered you? Artur Tschistokow is an outstanding man and it is furthermore time, that we start to fight here! We can`t enjoy our hermit lifes forever!”, hissed the village boss.
His daughter, standing next to Frank, shook her head: “My father is nuts, no question!”
“This rally is just crazy. What if some of us are arrested by the police or even shot down? Shall we risk our lives for a ridiculous demonstration in a dilapidated Belarusian city?”, shouted one of the villagers.
“I don`t think that it will be that dangerous. Our Russian friends have professionally planned this rally and after one

hour the whole thing will be over, got it? Apart from that, the police presence in Nowopolozk won`t be strong."
"Really? How can you know all this, Thorsten?", complained Bäumer.
"This is no armed assault on a government building, but just a little demonstration which will attract some attention. Now calm down!", grumbled the village boss and stroked through his gray hair.
"Anyhow, you haven`t asked us, if we want this. And if we want a cooperation with that Tschistokow at all!", said Steffen de Vries, the Belgian.
"Wait a minute! I bought this rotten, formerly deserted village and built it up! Do not forget that! Without me, there wouldn`t be a hiding place for all of you!", yelled Wilden in anger.
"Let`s see how long this hiding place will still be safe", said his daugther and looked in Frank`s direction.
"But you have not bought us!", growled Frank. "A leader is only proper in his position, when he shows responsibility for those who are led by him. But you have ignored that rule!"
"Apart from that, you can not force us to follow you to Nowopolozk!", said a woman, waving her hands.
"She is right, dad!", said Julia.
Her father looked at her insultedly, pushing his thin lower lip upward. For several seconds he hesitated and was silent.
"I fed up with your crazy ideas too, Thorsten!", hissed his wife Agatha in the background
"Well, I will go to the rally! Who is courageous enough to march through the streets of Nowopolozk for just one hour, might contact me. The others can pull up weeds in their gardens or scavenge the street in front of her houses! What has become of you? A horde of little Babbitts?"
Wilden left the barn, loudly cursing and ranting. The meeting was over.

But the former businessman was as stubborn as his new Russian friend, and it lasted only a few days until he started a new campaign to convince his fellows to come with him to the rally.
Again and again, the older man talked insistenly to the young men of Ivas and did not even stop in front of Frank and Alfred. He stressed the importance of a resistance on the spot, and advertised the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* as good as he could. Three long weeks, he laid siege to Frank and Alfred and finally he succeeded. The two men promised to accompany him to the demonstration in Nowopolozk. Annoyed and tired of the eternal arguing, they agreed and gave up. And now, still more young men followed the village boss to Artur`s rally. He had enforced his will with ruthless tenacity.

Rally in Nowopolozk

Artur Tschistokow had expected about 1000 people, to come to his first public demonstration, and his men had drummed up business for the event for weeks. Already in the early afternoon of 26.07.2033, hundreds of mainly young people had come to Nowopolozk, in order to protest. Until the beginning of the event at 15.00 o`clock, finally over 4000 supporters and sympathizers joined the crowd.
Three days before the rally, the local authorities had received a message and had called together all available policemen in the inner city of Nowopolozk. When they saw how many men and women had come out of the trains, and what great number of people was still coming by car, they nervously called for back-up from Vilnius, Minsk and the other cities. It should become an eventful day.
Frank, Alf, Wilden and John, the Irishman, arrived at Nowopolozk at 14.00 o`clock. Three further cars from Ivas followed them, coming via other access roads to the city, so that they did not form a too long and conspicuous motorcade. The trip to Nowopolozk was uneventful and when they finally reached the city, they could already see a big crowd of people with flags and large banners from a distance.
The policemen, who had taken up position in some side streets, did not dare not intervene so far, to avoid an early escalation. John Thorphy parked his car near the meeting point and Frank and the others walked fastly in the direction of the protesters. Then Artur Tschistokow recognized them, waved them nearer and shook their hands with a broad smile.

“Welcome, my friends!”, he said. “I am delighted that you are here. Come still more of you from Ivas?”
“Some more are on their way...”, answered Wilden briefly and started to grin.
“You have said, however, about 1000 people would come today. But there are many more!”, said Frank, looking impressedly at the Russian rebel and the crowd behind him.
“I did not think that so many people would come to Nowopolozk. And many more from my group will still come!”, returned Tschistokow proudly.
“Don`t be too enthusiastic, buddy! The number of cops around us seems to increase...”, muttered Alf quietly.
“The whole thing will end at 16:00 o`clock. Until then, hopefully, there will be just these few cops in the side streets. And they won`t do something!”, reassured them the village boss.
Frank remained silent for some minutes and watched the men and women, who had gathered here today. He had never participated in a demonstration and it was, although the young man had had a lot of excitement in the last years, a great feeling to be part of a protesting crowd like this. Kohlhaas looked forward to shout out his rage about the World Government, despite a subliminal sense of worry, that some legions of heavily armed policemen would suddenly pounce on them. Even if he had to shout in Russian, he would shout – at the top of his lungs.
“It`s better to mum!”, advised Wilden. “The cops are making photos of us and will evaluate them afterwards. If they can`t hold us back today, they will try to identify and catch us after all this.”
Frank, Alf and the others masked themselves with black scarves and put on sunglasses. Furthermore, they wore baseball caps or even balaclavas. Wilden was right, the rally would be filmed and photographed by the security forces,

lurking in the side streets around them. Most of the others had already masked themselves too, as Frank recognized. There was no other chance for the protesters.
Who was clearly identified by the police as a participant of an illegal demonstration, could expect some really big problems in the near future. However, Artur Tschistokow did not mask himself at all. His face was already well known, and he had moreover planned to deliver a short speech today. Apart from that, he even wanted to be seen. This rally was supposed to make him and his organization famous.
”Have you seen any camera crews or reporters?”, asked Kohlhaas the village boss.
“Not yet! But they media won`t ignore this. Wait and see, my friend!”
Tschistokow walked through the crowd again and shouted some instructions at his followers. Frank could recognize Peter Ulljewski between some young men and saluted him from afar. The sturdy Russian smiled, pointed at the pistol on his belt and appeared belligerent. Meanwhile, more and more people came from all sides and Tschistokow started to convoke the clusters of people, standing around, to from a long line.
“I just hope that we come out of this city again, and everything runs smooth”, said Frank, looking nervously at Wilden.
His green eyes carefully probed the vicinity, but it really seemed that no further police forces would arrive at Nowopolozk today.
“I think that Artur has planned this rally cannily. The *Rus* have posted scouts at the major access streets to the city. They will warn us, if more cops come from outside. He has at least explained it to me this way”, answered Wilden.

Apparently, he was that impressed by the young Russian, that he totally gave him credit for the perfect planning of an illegal demonstration.

The rally started. A command was yelled and hundreds of men and women started moving forward. The rebels from Ivas remained at the end of the long line of protesters, marching through the streets of Nowopolozk. Alongside them were some tall Russians with guns, Tschistokow`s new guardsmen. The leader of the *Rus* intended to lead his followers from the city center to a densely populated estate of prefabricated houses, about two kilometers away. There he wanted to deliver his speech.
The demonstrators walked slowly through the streets, waving a lot of Russia and dragon head flags which were officially banned by the Medschenko regime. Someone shouted slogans into a megaphone. Meanwhile, the dragon head had become the symbol of the freedom movement.
It had been designed by Artur Tschistokow himself. A white flag with a black dragon`s head to commemorate the founders of Russia, the Varangians or Rus. The symbol was referring to the dragon heads of their Viking long boats.
The marching crowd repeated the slogans with a furious screaming. It was so loud, that Frank`s ears hurt after a while.
“What are they yelling?”, he wanted to know from Wilden now.
“Freedom for Belarus! Down with Medschenko!”, explained the former businessman and smiled at him.
“Okay!”, muttered Kohlhaas and looked around. Finally, the men from Ivas joined the shouting and repeated the Russian slogans in a strange gibberish.
Shortly afterwards, they marched through a rundown shopping center and some citizens hailed them. More and

more people came out of their houses and applauded loudly. They laughed and shouted something in Russian. Frank could only understand “Artur Tschistokow”. A little later, they turned into another street and marched towards a gray estate of prefabricated houses. Frank saw the outlines of shabby, huge apartment blocks above the heads of the screaming protesters from a distance.
“God bless Ivas! This quarter is more than ugly”, he said to Alf.
”What?”, asked Bäumer who could hardly understand his own word.
“Ivas is much more beautiful than this ghetto!”, shouted Kohlhaas in his ear.
“Yes, you`re right!”, answered his sturdy friend, looking around in disgust.
Then the demonstrators stopped yelling, while many people opened their windows and screamed something for their part. Some of them even hung out the Belarusian flag or joined the mass. The long worm of men and women had finally reached the second rallying point.
Ugly apartment blocks surrounded them now. The mass formed a giant circle, while Artur Tschistokow gave some instructions. Frank, Alfred and Wilden made their way through the crowd and walked to the front ranks. The leader of the freedom movement took a bullhorn and started his speech with a booming voice.
“What did he say?”, asked Frank the village boss again.
“He has introduced himself to the people as the coming liberator of their country”, said the gray-haired man.
“That`s what I call pride...”, muttered Kohlhaas.
“What did you say, Frank?”
“Nothing, it`s all right!”

“He promises the people to give them work!”, thought Kohlhaas. “This must sound like music in the ears of these poor guys.”
Tschistokow`s voice surged like a hurricane through the streets and he passionately gestured with his hands, while his supporters cheered and applauded as loud as they could. Now dozens of people streamed out of their dilapidated apartment blocks and joined the crowd. The impassioned speech of the young politician lasted half an hour and finally ended with a thunderous applause.
Meanwhile, about hundred policemen had gathered at the end of the street. They behaved guardedly and Artur asked them to make the way free for the return march. Some of the Russians threatened them with pistols and rifles, but the officers just stepped aside and allowed the demonstrators to pass.

„He has said one hour! Now, it`s a quarter past four, Tschistokow shall end this rally immediately!“, nagged Bäumer.
“Just wait and stay cool! He will end it in the next minutes”, said Wilden annoyedly.
The procession of protesters marched slowly back towards the city center and their chants echoed from the dirty walls of the apartment blocks around them.
“Look! The number of cops increases”, said Frank and felt his inner tension rise.
As the crowd reached a square with a big fountain in its middle, a murmur went through the ranks of the demonstrators and the long human worm suddenly stopped. A group of policemen had surrounded the area around the square and further officers were waiting in some side streets. Slowly it became uncomfortable. Artur Tschistokow

yelled something from the front of the procession and his followers became increasingly restless.
“What`s up now?”, shouted Frank, while Wilden grabbed his arm and pulled him back.
“Artur has just said that the rally is over! All shall go home now!”, translated by the village boss. “And he has asked the police, to allow his men to leave the city in peace...”
Suddenly, a police officer shouted a response into his megaphone. Artur Tschistokow answered him in the same way. Meanwhile, Frank tried to look at the front rows and was bouncing nervously up and down.
Finally, the crowd moved on and reached the police cordon. A police chief shouted some warnings at the protesters, while more and more of his colleagues appeared in the side streets.
“They should let us go. Otherwise, some people will die today!”, muttered Bäumer.
Frank told his comrades from Ivas to prepare for a possible confrontation. Wilden had already become pale. His trip to Nowopolozk seemed not to be that funny as he had thought at first. A group of young Russians roared something at the police, then the situation got out of control. Weapons were drawn and Artur Tschistokow gave his guardsmen the order to attack the policemen, because they still tried to block the way of the demonstrators.
Some shots could be heard and the crowd ran forward with a loud scream. Frank and the others could hardly stay on top of things in the outbreaking chaos. Screams resounded around them and the outnumbered policemen started to flee. Some of them still fired a few shots at the demonstrators, but finally they withdrew.
Over 4000 people rushed forward now, completely disorganized and some of them ran into the side streets as fast as possible to get away. The rebels from Ivas struggled

through the crowd and tried to identify Tschistokow somewhere in the excited mass, while Frank heard several shots in the distance.
“Let`s get away from here, run to the cars!”, shouted Wilden nervously and hurried past a group of Russians.
Frank and the others turned into a side street and took their weapons. There was nobody. Apparently, the policemen had fled and were waiting for reinforcements. The Russian rebel leader had already disappeared in the crowd and had probably taken a different escape route.
Soon after, Frank, Alf and the rest reached their cars and drove away with roaring engines. Behind them, they saw a group of protesters, also jumping into their vehicles.
“Damn! These motherfuckers are waiting for us!”
Bäumer pointed at some policemen who were standing on the street, excitedly waving their hands.
“Stop! Stop!”, they yelled, while John Thorphy stepped on the gas.
“Drive on!”, shouted Frank at the Irishman, who raced towards the officers with screeching tires.
Wilden tried to keep his head down and was gripped by sheer panic. Meanwhile, Kohlhaas had rolled down the window and fired several shots at the cops. One of them collapsed with a loud scream. Then the enraged officers fired back, while the shabby car came nearer and nearer.
“Down!”, shouted the Irishman and two bullets hit the windshield above their heads and shards of glass rained down on them.
But the car did not stop and was still dashing straightforward. Suddenly the police officers jumped to the side with a loud cry. Some bullets banged against the rear of the vehicle, while it shot across an intersection at full speed.

“Shit! We must get out of this damn city now!”, grumbled Frank and wiped off some small flinders from his pants.
Wilden fumbled on his DC-Stick with sweaty fingers, while John Thorphy hit the gas and drove at breakneck speed across a wide main street, ignoring several red lights.
“Now right, and then there must be a feeder road out of Nowopolozk!”, groaned the former entrepreneur, whose nerves were raw.
They finally reached the feeder road, left the city and drove away as fast as they could. After they had left Nowopolozk behind themselves, the came to a larger freeway. Roadblocks had not been set up by the police yet, because the most cops were still in the inner city.
”Give it to me!”, said Frank and grabbed Bäumer`s machine gun. He loaded it, while a cold wind whistled through the broken windshield.
“If the cops try to block the road somewhere, I will give them some little gifts – some bullets!”, muttered Frank, staring at the street.
But nothing happened anymore, on that day. Outside of Nowopolozk, the underpaid local police officers had just been overwhelmed by the whole situation. They had not had enough time to block any streets or to roll back the protesters.
As Frank later learned, about 200 demonstrators, who had not left the city center in time, had been arrested. Three police officers and about a dozen protesters had been wounded or even killed after the rally. All in all, the demonstration had been a success, and the reinforcements had finally come almost two hours too late. Furthermore, Artur Tschistokow and the other rebels from Ivas had escaped the police. The leader of the *Rus* had disappeared in the chaos and some of his supporters brought him out of Nowopolozk a few days later by night.

“Ha! That was brilliant!”, said Wilden and enjoyed a sip of vodka.
“Well, I don`t know. Artur`s demonstration of power has been successful in any case, I have to admit”, returned Frank and looked thoughtfully at the village boss. “Nevertheless, five protesters have been shot by the cops!”
“Nobody has dared to do something like this in the last years. No doubt, it was a great thing. I`m curious what the news will show us”, said Wilden proudly and seemed to feel like a young revolutionary again.
”John is certainly less enthusiastic, because of his destroyed windshield”, muttered Kohlhaas. “And his car has some bullet holes too.”
“Oh, the windshield! So what?”, laughted Wilden. “This is kid stuff. He can repair it...”
”Thank God that he has previously exchanged the license plates. The car has surely been filmed somewhere”, added Frank and switched on the television.
“Don`t you think, that they can track our way back to Ivas, Thorsten?”, worried Bäumer.
“No, they won`t find us. Keep your head, Alf!”, answered Wilden and continued drinking.
As expected, the rally in Nowopolozk was the main topic in the evening news. The Belarusian television showed some pictures of masked protesters and also the short gunfight with the police, while the journalists screamed bloody murder.
Even sub-governor Medschenko expressed his sorrows and pointed out that the authorities would now proceed more decisively against Artur Tschistokow and his organization. Finally, the excited reporter went to the police chief of Nowopolozk and demanded an explanation from him, because of the deficient preparation of his men on the illegal demonstration. The man just stuttered something in front of

the camera and gave the impression, as if his days as police chief of the industrial city were already numbered.
At last, television showed a reward poster of Artur Tschistokow and asked the people for informations, where he could be. Frank and the others could not resist a sardonic grin. This time, apart from the fact that they had taken a lot of risks, they had beaten the powerful in the sub-sector “Belarus-Baltic”.
While the media proudly spoke of a “series of arrests”, the rebels hoped that all this had been factored in by Tschistokow, and that the detainees would not tell the police any important things.
But they were wrong. The Belarusian police treated the prisoners with sheer brutality and forced their unfortunate victims to give them a lot of new informations about the *Freedom Movement of the Rus*. Furthermore, the local officers were supported by foreign GSA agents who were mostly successful with their ruthless methods of interrogation. Some of the men they had caught, were never seen again.
Soon, the authorities knew that Tschistokow was living in Vitebsk and scoured the city for him to the last corner. But only Peter Ulljewski and a very small number of Artur`s closest friends knew, where the dissident hid. Nevertheless, he moved to Pinsk, for safety reasons, where a discreet sympathizer of his organization had rented an apartment for him outside the city center.

In the next weeks, the young politician came several times to Ivas to work on his illegal Internet sites with HOK`s assistance. Wilden and he “conspired around” and organized one publicity campaign after another, while the young men from Ivas were sent out to Belarus to distribute leaflets. Meanwhile, the underground newspaper of the

freedom movement had almost tripled its circulation. And it was the same with the number of supporters of the organization. The intelligently constructed “cell system”, whereby each local group received only limited informations, had safed the organization from major damage yet, although the police was arresting new suspects almost every day.
Meanwhile, Frank and Alfred tried to stay away from any political agitation, leaving it to Wilden and the young people who were eager for new activities after the thrilling rally in Nowopolozk. The village boss really flourished in these days, and soon felt like a true commander. His organizational genius and his comprehensive knowledge helped Tschistokow in many situations and when the month of August came to an end, the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* had become a much more “punchy” organization.
Moreover, Tschistokow`s men had infiltrated a number of industrial complexes to prepare strikes and to raise the workers against the government.
The group of armed guardsmen for special events and rallies had been restructured and was much better organized now. Even more weapons had been stockpiled for the future.
In addition, the propaganda machine was running at full speed and Wilden was pumping a lot of money into it. A small “secret service” had lastly been established by Tschistokow and him which kept an eye on suspicious and not trusty members.
Wilden, however, was some kind of “PR manager” and reformed the whole propaganda concept of the movement, changing the content of leaflets, newspapers and flyers in a way, that even the mass of the people could understand everything.

“Effective propaganda explains a difficult topic with a few words!”, said the village boss.
Besides, he and Artur Tschistokow wrote a varied program with clear claims and political goals for rebuilding the country and overcoming the social crisis, which had driven countless Belarusians into poverty. Matsumoto`s policy partly served them as a model.
Moreover, the village boss told his Belarusian friend that the supporters of the freedom movement would need some kind of uniform to give them a recognizable look at demonstrations and rallies. Finally, they chose gray shirts and black trousers.
The symbol of the organization, the black dragon`s head on a white background, was designed much more eye-catching and Wilden even changed the flag of the *Rus* by adding two red stripes at the top and bottom of it.
In the meantime, Artur Tschistokow had written an open letter that was sent to all police stations in the country, in which he apologized for the riot in Nowopolozk, stressing that his movement would see “a brother in every honest Russian policeman”.
On the new leaflets was basically a photo of him and he was introduced to the readers as the coming “liberator of Belarus” - or even as “last hope for the people.”
It had been Wilden`s idea to build up some kind of “leader cult” around Tschistokow, because the mass of the people did not identify with abstract political programs, but with a single person who represented them.
“An angry crowd is helpless without a man who leads it. It is never able organize itself on its own. Furthermore, it can not be convinced by arguing, because crowds are always driven by instincts and emotions. This is the first rule of every revolution!

Moreover, the crowd is not able to think objectively. It thinks only in categories of “good” or “evil”, “black” or “white” – and so on. Our propaganda must consider this, if it wants to be successful. Artur Tschistokow is always right and good, the World Government is always evil and wrong. This is the first rule of propaganda!
A true revolutionary movement does not want to change a wrong system, because it can not be changed. It always wants to destroy and replace it! We shall never make compromises and we shall never tolerate the wrong faith! Our faith is the only true faith! Our truth is the only truth! Therefore, the first principle of a revolutionary movement is: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me!”
Without considering these maxims, we will fail. They have always been valid and will always be vaild!”, lectured Wilden.
Tschistokow tried to follow these rules and especially among the young men he found more and more supporters, who joined his organization.

The harvest had begun in Ivas and the young men and women had worked for days on the fields around the village, in order to take as many fruits from the soil as they could for the winter. Today the were working on the farm of the Westermanns, who cultivated potatoes.
“Do you really think that Artur Tschistokow will ever be successful?”, asked Frank, panting and digging out a thick tuber.
“Well, he just impresses me. He can talk to the people like a real leader. I would say, he is a born leader!”, said Sven and wiped the sweat off his disfigured face.
“Yes, the demonstration has been impressive, but it is nothing but a little stitch for the system”, answered Kohlhaas soberly.

“I have already been on the road with the other activists, several times, and we have distributed leaflets and so on. Artur has really grown in popularity, even if the media constantly slander and berate him as a madman or even terrorist”, replied the blond man who obviously enjoyed it, to be a part of Tschistokow`s movement.
“Don`t chat about politics – work!”, said Julia Wilden with a charming smile behind them.
“Yes, Hasi! We work hard since hours!”, returned Frank and winked at her.
Sven cleared his throat and looked with his remaining eye at him, then he continued: “When I was in Minsk with the others, we have met some activists from St. Petersburg. In Western Russia are already a few cells of Tschistokow`s organization – as they have told us. Believe me, this man spins his threads everywhere and he has a lot of underground contacts to Russia and the Ukraine. He is a genius!”
”I think he is very clever and also courageous, but a rebellion always needs a bang. If you know what I mean?”
“No!”, answered Sven.
“It must go a jolt through the masses. An event that makes them very upset and awakes them. One thing, that brings the anger to overflow - a new tax hike or something like this...”
“But millions of people are already very poor. They have hardly a Globe in their pockets anymore. Two months ago, I have been with the others in Minsk. The city is rotting! Thousands of beggars fill the streets. Many people are hungry and find no more jobs...”, elucidated Sven puzzledly.
“Yes, but they have not the courage to stand up, because they think that they can`t achieve anything alone. And some of them still have enough money to live and they would never take a risk which could ruin their life.

Believe me, every rebellion needs a ignition spark. Probably, the time has not come yet", said Kohlhaas.
Sven murmured: "Maybe you`re right. But until then, we must preach Artur`s ideology to the people. We must give them a new hope - and this hope is called Artur Tschistokow!"
"Well said, my friend. He also seems to be your hope", joked Frank, eyeing a rotten potato.
"Yes, he is!", returned the blond man
"How do you do, beside that? What`s about your depressions? Can you handle them?", Frank suddenly asked and his words pierced into Sven`s tender spot.
The young man hesitated for some seconds and twisted his mouth. He looked, as if someone had simply removed half of his facial skin. His remaining eye turned to Frank and stared at him.
"Well, just look at me, then you got the answer. I am crippled, but I try to accept it. I have not fought in Japan, where they have smashed my ass, to give up the fight now, Frank. Apart from this, I have nothing to lose!", opined Sven with a sad face.
"All of us are nothing but outlaws! Some of us have visible wounds, others have crippled souls – like me. You will overcome your pain, and I will overcome it too. Just visit us in the next days and we`ll have a booze. That`s a good idea, isn`t it?"
"This is always a good idea!", replied Sven, smiling.
Frank clapped the young man on the back and carried a sack of potatoes into the storage room behind the house of the Westermanns.

Meanwhile, Artur Tschistokow had planned a major event in the northwest of Belarus. He had chosen a barely inhabited village near Maladziekna and hoped that the police would

not bother them too much. Wilden was excited and tried once more to convince the other villagers to come with him to the meeting. Most of the young men from Ivas, and even their families, were eager to follow him. They had great expectations, because Tschistokow had promised them an unforgettable day.
Frank and Alfred were still unsure, whether they should attend the meeting. Meanwhile, Wilden`s permanent planning, arranging, conspiring and his open cooperation with Artur Tschistokow and his men, worried them more and more.
“If the Russians constantly go in and out here, then I`m curious, when the first GSA agents will visit us”, said Frank and Bäumer nodded.
“Wilden only talks about Artur and the coming revolution. If the cops get wind of it, we can ask Matsumoto for asylum one day. Maybe the authorities already know about our sweet little village...”
“If this ever happens, we should hope that we have a revolution tomorrow, even here in Lithuania. Otherwise it could become very uncomfortable”, grumbled Kohlhaas.
The two men went into the living room of their shabby house and sat down on the old, tattered couch. Alf booted up his laptop and examined the website of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus*. Then they watched their latest videos. Some Russian activists had filmed the demonstration in Nowopolozk and had made something like an own video review. The video had already over 200000 hits.
”Anyway, they are pretty active!”, mumbled Bäumer with a touch of respect.
“Look at this! They spray slogans on some walls!”, Frank pointed at the bottom of the screen.

Another video showed a group of graffiti sprayers in a foggy night in Minsk. A masked man waved his hand before the camera.
“Artur Tschistokow gives you work and freedom!”, translated Alf quietly.
Other videos were about members of the organization with black hoods, distributing leaflets in an estate of prefabricated houses.
Frank grinned. “For some of these guys, it probably seems to be some kind of adventure!”
“But a damn dangerous adventure!”, returned Alf.
“They are daring, these Russians. I somehow like it”, said Frank.
Suddenly someone knocked on the door. The two men startled and ran into the hallway. It was Wilden. Frank rolled his eyes.

The village boss told them with great enthusiasm about the preparations for the next event. Sven and about 20 other young men from Ivas had driven to Minsk to support the *Rus* again. They wanted to stay there for another week, said Wilden, and was proud of the young activists.
“Yes, yes! We will come with you, Thorsten. Please no more lectures...”, interrupted him Frank and smiled at the older man.
”I knew it! Distributing leaflets and spraying on walls is just below your level, I know this. But this is also a part of the political struggle”, said the former businessman and tried to flatter Frank and Alf.
“We can`t be constantly at war - like in Japan. And I`m damn happy about it”, answered Kohlhaas soberly.
“If there would ever be one here, I`d know where my best soldiers are! You are the elite of my men!”

“Yes, Thorsten. You say it three times a day”, grumbled Bäumer, perking his eyebrows up.
“I just wanted to annotate...”
”Okay! We will still watch this freedom movement for a while. If we decide to join Artur`s organization one day, we will do our best. You know that!”, remarked Frank.
“Sure!”, answered Wilden impatiently. “So you will come with me to the rally?”
“Hell! Yes!”, groaned the two.
The leader of Ivas nodded and turned on his heel. Then he went to the front door, opened it and left the house. ”It will be a great thing! Believe me!”, they heard Wilden shout from the street.
“He is the world`s biggest gadfly!”, moaned Frank.

Great Speeches and New Problems

It was a cold morning and light drizzle came from the sky in thin threads. Frank and Alfred reached the village center, where they were already expected by dozens of men and women. Wilden hastened to welcome them. He grinned broadly and waved them nearer. Julia followed him.
“We`re ready! You can drive with me!”, he said and shook the hands of the two men who still looked bleary.
Now the other villagers went to their cars too. The group of young men from Ivas, which was led by Sven, had already left the village to met Artur Tschistokow and his comrades.
”I`m really curious about all this!”, whispered Frank, following the village boss to his car. Alf yawned and said that he wanted to have a nap during the trip to Schtewatj.
“At least, Julia is here!”, thought Frank and looked at the blonde woman, who also did not seem to be well rested.
Michael Ziegler, a shy young man, who had shirked the military mission in Japan, drove with them. Frank sat behind Wilden, together with Julia on the backseat. Finally, they started their trip to Schtewatj, where they expected a great event.
”Are you happy to come with us, Julia?”, asked Kohlhaas the pretty blonde.
“We will see...”, she muttered. “My father says, it will be an impressive day.”
“He always says that...”, replied Frank, clapping on Wilden`s shoulder.
“You will love it! Artur has mobilized a lot of people!”, said the village boss and started to whistle silently.
His daughter just grinned. Meanwhile, Frank gaped at her, preoccupied in thoughts, admiring her long, slender legs,

quickly looking out the window again, when the young woman started to smile at him.
“You seem to like it, don`t you, Franky?”, she joked and opened her blue eyes.
“Uh, yes, yes! I am already looking forward to the...rally...”, he stammered awkwardly.
“I hope, that we won`t have as big troubles as in Nowopolozk!”, moaned Bäumer and closed his eyes to doze for a while.
“No, that`s just unrealistic. This is a quite rural area, far away from any bigger cities. I don`t think that the cops will harass us there”, said the village boss confidently.
“Nevertheless, I have a queasy feeling about it”, remarked Julia and Frank had the want to hug her for a short moment. But he checked himself and behaved.
“We will protect you, so don`t worry!”, he said then.
She just nodded and looked quietly out the window. Frank was bemused and stared at her narrow, red lips which trembled slightly as the car jolted over a badly paved road. Her profile was glorious, thought Kohlhaas, like a statue from ancient Greece, with an aristocratic, long face, a pointed chin and a well-shaped nose. Julia looked like the prototype of a nordic goddess.
“Hmmm...”, hummed Frank, beholding her with mouth agape. Suddenly, Julia turned to him.
“What`s up?”, she asked.
“What? Nothing! I just pondered...about the rally. Let`s see how many comrades will...uh...come. Important is that... it is important that all men come...”, explained the young man nervously.
“Yes!”, was her short answer. Wilden`s daughter made her lips to a thin, red line and still looked out the window, ignoring Frank. Her father started to whistle again and lectured at this time, for once, not about world politics. But

today, he had still a lot of opportunities to talk about his favorite topic.

The trip to Schtewatj lasted almost seven hours. Sometimes the car drove over ruined streets full of weed, which was sprouting between the large cracks and holes in the asphalt. They drove past Minsk and finally reached an abandoned rural region. Here, the roads were nothing but muddy, long paths. Eventually, they came to a small village.
Anyway, Frank had somehow enjoyed the trip. He had never been in Julia`s proximity that long and had tried to use the opportunity for longer conversations with her. He had often talked about politics. Thorsten Wilden, Alfred and Michael Ziegler had talked about nothing else too, but the young woman had soon had enough from their revolutionary plans and had tried to find a more interesting topic – without success.
Sometimes Alf had briefly turned around, grinning ambiguously at his friend. But this trip was not the right occasion to flirt with Julia, especially since her father was the driver of the car. However, Wilden had only one thing on his mind, as always - politics!

The village streets were over and over clogged with people. Hundreds, even thousands of visitors had gathered here, and the fields around the village were full of cars. ”My goodness, what a crowd!”, called Wilden and drove the car slowly through a group of friendly smiling men.
“The show starts in one hour...”, said Alfred eagerly.
The large number of people almost looked like a small army, and Frank rapturously stared at the growing mass around him. Soon after, they parked the car next to a field road and walked to the venue, a large meadow with a big stage. A rock band played here and some Russian youths

were dancing pogo and yelling loudly. At some distance, they could see a group of Tschistokow`s guardsmen who wore gray shirts and black trousers. Apparently the new dress code had already gained acceptance. A few of the uniformed men had rifles and watched out for suspicious people who joined the crowd in front of them.
Wilden called Tschistokow on his cellphone and the tall, blond man came to them after a few minutes. He happily welcomed the Germans and shook their hands with a broad smile.
”That`s great, isn`t it?”, said the Russian proudly.
Wilden was more than impressed. “Yes, this is amazing, Artur!”
“Amazing?”, Tschistokow was puzzled and seemed to think about the meaning of the word.
”This is just great!”, explained Frank, still smiling.
“Ah, yes! This is the biggest meeting of our freedom movement that ever was!”
“How many people have come here today?”, asked the village boss.
“I think 7000 people, perhaps even more...”, replied the Russian.
”Gosh!”, exclaimed Bäumer enthusiastically.
Artur looked at him quizzically. “What does this mean again?”
”This is great!”, translated Frank with a grin.
“Ha, ha! Yes! Very great, my friends! Today is a big day for our organization”, said the blond man.
The politician finally walked away and went to another group, while his friends from Ivas decided to glance around. Some Russians eyeballed them carefully. Obviously, not everyone of Artur`s men liked non-Russian guests. But the most of them had nothing against Germans or other people of European descent. Frank, Alf, Wilden, Julia and Michael

soon stood in the middle of the crowd, eyeing the venue a little more closely. Some members of the freedom movement were selling T-shirts, flags and CD`s at some stalls.
Somewhere, a group of young people was singing a Russian song and the raspy voice of the singer of the rock band could still be heard in the background. It was a tremendous bustle and more and more new guests still came to the little village. Now Tschistokow could be recognized between some Russian activists, looking at his German comrades and waving them nearer.
“This is Viktor from Grodno! He is one of my best men!”, explained the leader of the *Rus*.
A young, athletic man who probably was in the mid-twenties, bowed politely and shook their hands. He even winked at Julia and said, “It is nice to meet such a beautiful person today!”
The young woman smiled and immediately blushed. Frank perked his eyebrows up and gave Viktor an angry look.
”Thanks!”, breathed Julia and smiled at Viktor.
“I must speak with a few other people. See you soon, my friends!”, said Tschistokow and disappeared again.
Viktor remained. He was talking to Julia, in English. She giggled quietly and seemed to be quite impressed by him. The rebel from Grodno was undoubtedly handsome, Frank had to admit this, deep inside. His light brown hair easily hung over his steel-blue eyes and his body was tall and thoroughly fit. He looked like an Olympic athlete.
Viktor finally took Julia to the side, and even told her that he wanted to introduce her to some of his friends. A moment later, she had disappeared with him in the crowd. Frank tried to dissemble his feelings, but this scenario did not please him at all.

“What does this guy want from Julia?”, he asked himself, turning his head to look at Alf.
“Come on, let`s walk around a bit”, said Bäumer, while Frank pulled a face. He tried to discover Julia somewhere in the crowd, but he had lost sight of her.
Shortly afterwards, the rock band left the stage and the people moved together. A man in a gray shirt checked the functioning of the speakers, then Artur Tschistokow went to the microphone.
He was welcomed with a deafening applause, while dragon head banners and Russia flags were waved. The dissident politician immediately started to speak, in front of over 7000 men and women.
Tschistokow was not nervous, to the contrary, he beheld the cheering crowd and was sure that his struggle had not been in vain. This event was only a small victory, but a first one, as he thought.
Meanwhile, Frank, Alf and Wilden stood in the first rank, looking up to the leader of the *Rus*, who delivered his speech with passion.
“You must translate it!”, said Kohlhaas to the village boss.
“Yes, no problem”, returned Wilden.
Now, Tschistokow spoke with a powerful voice and a loud murmur went through the audience. He introduced himself to the many new supporters of his organization, thanked them for coming and evoked the unity and strength of the *Rus*.
Then he promised his followers that the Belarusian revolution would come in the near future, and that the traitors in Minsk would soon lose their power - as Wilden translated. The crowd was clapping.
“He is profoundly persuasive...”, remarked Kohlhaas and the village boss looked enthusiastically at the stage.

“He is a brilliant speaker! I love listening to him”, said the former businessman, gazing in abstraction at the Russian.
Tschistokow attacked the Medschenko government with bitter words and explained his audience its crimes against land and people. He furthermore promised that the old Belarus would be born again one day, what his supporters liked to hear.
“This is our land! We don`t want any foreign troops here!”, Frank could understand. Again, a thunderous applause surged across the large meadow.
The leader of the *Rus* became more and more enraged now, and electrified the crowd like a true propagandist. Men and women were hanging on Tschistokow`s every word and were cheering still louder.
After an hour, the speech was suddenly interrupted by a loud rotor noise. Three police helicopters were circling above their heads and the crowd was shaken by nervousness like a herd of animals. Some guardsmen pointed their guns at the sky and threatened the helicopters which were apparently filming the participants of the event and the parked cars. Tschistokow vigorously called his followers to order, and asked them to ignore the provocation.
Frank ducked and pushed his black cap even deeper into his face, then he put on his sunglasses. Hundreds of people around him also began to mum.
“Oh, great. I was already wondering that no cops have noticed all this yet. Such a big event, it is impossible to keep it a secret”, whispered Kohlhaas.
“The Belarusian cops won`t dare to attack a crowd like this, Frank. Not here in this rural area. They just film us...”, muttered Bäumer, hiding his face behind a black scarf.

“It is enough if they just collect new informations by filming the people and the license plates of our cars. I`m afraid that some guys here will be visited in the next days and weeks.”
“Our license plates are just fakes...”, said Bäumer.
“Yes, I know, but I don`t think that everyone here has taken the same precautions!”
“Don`t worry! The Belarusian cops are just underpaid and listless idiots. This is “Eastern Europe” – not “Central Europe”. I`m not afraid of those morons...”, remarked Wilden confidently.

After a while, the police helicopters just disappeared and Tschistokow continued his speech with the usual enthusiasm. He called his supporters up, not to be intimidated and to remain steadfast in the face of “state terror”.
For a further hour, he preached his doctrine to the listeners. Then he finally finished the rally. The singing an old patriotic song which Tschistokow had made to the official anthem of his freedom movement, several weeks ago, ended the event. All *Rus* waved their flags, cheered and went back home then.
Frank and Alf did not see the politician again for the rest of this day, because he immediately left the place, together with Peter Ulljewsik and some other comrades. When they came back to their car, Julia was already waiting for them – and Viktor stood smiling beside her. The handsome Russian said goodbye to the young woman, kissed her hand and finally departed. Frank gave him a black look and got into the car.

“Where have you been all the time?”, grumbled Kohlhaas at Julia.

“I was walking around with Viktor and some of his friends. He is so hilarious. Unfortunately, he can only speak English”, she chirped and looked pleased.
“What a pity...”, returned Frank.
“Yes, you should get to know him. He is so funny, and soon he wants to visit us in Ivas.”
“What?”, gasped Frank and almost exploded. He could not believe his ears.
“Well, he wants to become acquainted with all of us...”
“He wants to...? Good for him!”, muttered Frank, staring straight ahead through the windshield.
An endless line of cars was clogging the muddy road in front of them, and now they could only drive at snail`s pace.
Wilden decided to use the extended break and explained everyone, even those, who did not want to hear it, the political importance of today`s event. He spoke of the “growing power of Tschistokow`s movement”, the “revolutionary potential” and the “cowardly state authority”.
Bäumer saw things differently and started to argue with the village boss. He was suspicious enough to be able to guess that the police had just used another strategy today, by filming the rally. The *Rus* had openly shown themselves and the helicopter had made enough pictures that the police could start a new wave of arrests in the next time.
Frank did not care about all this, for now. He felt deeply offended, because he had waited for Julia the whole day, like a silly boy. Already now, he found Viktor as sympathic as a frostbitten toe. Finally he did not talk with her for the rest of the trip, not a single word, just trying to ignore her, fuming with rage.

The visitors from Ivas reached their village without any problems, because they had avoided to drive on any freeways or important routes. This had indeed taken a lot of

time, but had finally saved them from police checks. Other participants were less fortunate. Several dozens of cars had been stopped by the police in the area around Schtewatj and soon the frist *Rus* had found themselves in a giant trap. The officers had never had the intention to attack over 7000 partly violent and armed supporters of the freedom movement directly, and had just waited till the crowd had dissolved again, to catch one *Rus* after another on the roads. This was much easier for them. Smaller groups of cars had been stopped by the cops, and hundreds of men and women were brought to jail. But this was only the beginning.

While Wilden and the leader of the *Rus* still believed that they had beaten the often listless appearing authorities once more, the police stroke back now – in a way, they had never expected. Meanwhile, GSA agents, partially flown in from the administrative sectors “Central Europe” and even “North America”, propelled the Belarusian police and supported them in their fight against political dissidents.
With the numerous car plates which had been filmed by the police helicopters, many young and inexperienced members of Tschistokow`s organization could be easily idenitfied in the following days. Shortly afterwards, a wave of house searches and arrests shook whole Belarus. Those who fell into the nets of the system, were confronted with long interrogations and even torture.
Until end of September, about 50 cell and group leaders of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* had been arrested by the police. All men, playing major roles in Tschistokow`s organization, were jailed for a long time or even liquidated.
Because of this unexpected storm, Artur Tschistokow fell into a deep hole of depression and anxiety. He no longer left his small two-room apartment in Pinsk and avoided any

contact to other members of his organization, except for his best friend Peter Ulljewski who occasionally visited him in the middle of the night. Now, the freedom movement had to face a brutal attack and seemed to be totally overwhelmed with the ruthless counterstrike of the system. Tschistokow was soon isolated and his organization started to crumble without his leadership.

It Could Always be Worse...

The media in the entire administrative sector “Eastern Europe” reported almost daily about the new successes in the “war on terror” against Artur Tschistokow and his followers. In the first week of October, it became even more unpleasant. Apparently, informers had found out much more about the structure of the freedom movement, as its leader had believed. Finally, the police even located his secret printing office.
Sub-governor Medschenko took the “omnipresent terrorist threat” as an opportunity to increase the surveillance of the larger cities of Belarus with more cameras and new scanning machines. Within just one month, the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* broke down under the massive pressure and became a desolate bunch of scared men and women. All its leaders had successfully been isolated, arrested or even executed.
Citizens with secret symphaties for Artur Tschistokow who still had jobs and families, retired into private life now – deeply shocked.
Who had ever been at a meeting of the *Rus*, was hoping that the authorities had not noticed it, otherwise it meant losing the job, getting a blocked Scanchip or going to prison. Even Frank and the other men from Ivas were disturbed and scared. Wilden wailed for days and regretted his careless and arrogant behavior. They could only hope now, that their contacts to Artur Tschistokow could not be retraced and that the name of their village would still remain a secret. And the following weeks should become a true nightmare.

“Damn!”, cried Frank, almost falling from the old chair in his barely furnished living room, staring in horror at the TV screen.
”Alf! Come here! Hurry up!”, he shouted and breathed rapidly.
Bäumer sneaked out of the bathroom, where he had previously browsed some old magazines, yawning loudly.
“What`s up?”, he asked annoyedly.
”This morning, the city governor of Moghilev, Roman Khazarov, was shot in front of his house. They say that the killers are members of Artur`s movement!”
Alf sat down on the couch, panting, while the shrill voice of the television reporter echoed through the room. She said that three young men had been arrested by the police. Then television showed some pictures of a house search and pamphlets of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus*.
“Now they have, what they needed!”, moaned Bäumer and hold his head. “The media will hype the whole thing and the cops will finally have a justification to fight tooth and nail against Tschistokow`s organization.”
“Yes, right...”, answered Frank and cursed loudly.
They went to Wilden, who had not heard of the incident so far. He had spent the previous part of this day with sorting his old books and reacted on the bad news with evident nervousness.
“From now on, as they said on TV, they will execute every member of Artur`s movement they can catch – as a terrorist!”, said Kohlhaas anxiously.
“They would have done it sooner or later anyway - and they already do so, partly. However, now they have a moral justification for such brutal measures against our people”, muttered the village boss thoughtfully.
“How many *Rus* actually know about Ivas?”, asked Alf then, glaring at Wilden.

“Thus, only Artur and his closest fellows”, returned the older man a bit uncertain.
“And that Viktor from Grodno! Julia has told him about our village. Moreover, many others probably know about this base, because you have talked to them. I know it, Thorsten!”, yelled Frank at the village boss.
“Well, I could not imagine that one day...”, stammered the man, trying to find an excuse.
“Shit!”, hissed Alf and followed Frank who was leaving the house. The next days were ruled by anxiety and nervousness, and it was unlikely that this condition would change soon.

“Have you gone insane?”, shouted Artur Tschistokow and his voice echoed from the dark cellar up to the street.
Peter Ulljewski held a trembling young man named Martin Malkin, the head of the group of Moghilev, in his strong hands and shook him. Then he pushed him against the gray concrete wall of the room.
”We thought...”, stammered the frightened young activist and held his head.
”Have I allowed this?”, hissed Tschistokow.
“No, but...but the cops have shot two of our men. For no reason!”, said Malkin sheepishly.
“Fuck! Now tell me, what has happened in Moghilev?”, growled Peter.
“Some of our comrades were in a pub in the inner city, where they got some troubles with a few Azerbaijanis. Meanwhile, they live in the east of Moghilev – en masse!”, explained Malkin.
”I know that! Go on!”, interrupted him the leader of the *Rus*.
“Yes, and the conflict heated up. The Azerbaijanis finally waited on the street in front of the pub and drew knives and brass knuckles, it were six of those fucking wogs. Then our

men came out of the pub and there was a first fight. One of us was wounded by a knife and the wogs ran away to call their friends. After half an hour, they came back with about 30 further men. Meanwhile, our comrades had also rounded up some other Russians who wanted to help us against that scum.
Shortly afterwards, two police cars arrived and the fucking cops accused our people that they were to blame for the dispute and wanted to instigate riots. Those damn Azerbaijanis could just walk away and the cops didn`t touch them!"
"Did the policemen knew that you are members of the freedom movement?", inquired Artur and nervously stroked through his hair.
"No! Of course not! Some of our men were very angry about the behaviour of the cops and yelled something at them. Then followed a brief scuffle and the cops suddenly shot around without hesitation. My best friend was hit in the face and died instantly, another was shot in the stomach and bled to death on the street."
"Yes, and then?", persisted Artur.
"I haven`t been there. It`s just what the others from Moghilev have told me. However, the rest of our men ran away."
"What has it to do with that Khazarov?", screamed Peter from the side and pressed Malkin against the wall.
"Damn! They have killed my best friend Alexander, with whom I have grown up. In the following days, all of us were fuming with rage. Some of our younger men called for a campaign of revenge. Someone had to pay for all this! Someone who is responsible for all that shit. We had so many problems with the cops and these gangs of foreigners and..."

“And then you have arranged to gun down the city governor?”, shouted Tschistokow.
“No! Three of our guys have made it on their own!”
“Bloody hell!”, grumbled Artur, kicking against a wooden box which burst with a loud crack.
“I should shoot these idiots! Since when are things like that done without my permission? Since when are things like that done at all - by members of my organization? We are freedom fighters, political activists – and no terrorists!”, hissed the blond man.
“Now they will hunt us down like mangy dogs. Just wait and see!”, muttered Peter Ulljewski and turned his back on the others.

Artur`s best friend and longtime supporter had correctly assessed the situation. In the following weeks, the media reported almost daily about new arrests and it still became worse.
The three young assassins from Moghilev who had quickly been found by the police, were convicted in a spectacular show trial and finally hanged a few days later. Many ordinary citizens who had viewed Artur Tschistokow as some kind of reformer, or even liberator, became uncertain now, because the media incessantly presented him as a leader of a “terrorist gang” or called him the “most dangerous maniac of Belarus”. Ultimately, some parts of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* just broke down under the increasing pressure and the structure of the organization fell into ruin.
Meanwhile, Artur Tschistokow had been brought to a secret location, somewhere in the north of the country, by his friend Peter. And he never left his hiding place again.
Apart from that, the inhabitants of Ivas tried to live their lifes and hoped that nobody would ever recognize the true

character of their village. In the meantime, Frank sank in a state of lethargy and sadness. Soon the winter of 2033 came over Lithuania and the first snowflakes fell from the sky. Occasionally, Kohlhaas asked Wilden, whether he had heard something of Tschistokow, but the village boss always reacted with a sorrowful shrug of the shoulders. The only positive news came from Japan, because Wilden telephoned with Mr. Taishi from time to time. In the Far East, president Matsumoto was building up his country and had consolidated his reign. This was the lone little flicker of hope in these dark days.

But there was one member of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* that still came to Ivas. It was not Artur Tschistokow, who was still hiding somewhere in Belarus, hoping that the storm would die down again. No, it was Viktor, the handsome, athletic leader of the group of Grodno. He visited the Wildens several times on his own - with a special interest for Julia.
The village boss found the young man quite sympathetic, although he was not all too pleased if visitors from the outside still came to the village. His daughter, however, was pleased, very pleased!
She had invited Viktor, just as she had promised it at the rally in Schtewatj. One day, Frank saw them talking and laughing loudly, when they walked through the village. He did not believe his eyes.
“What the hell does that pretty boy do here?”, he muttered silently, when Julia and Viktor crossed the street.
In the last weeks, Frank had ignored her in annoyance, because of her little flirt with the Russian at the rally in Schtewatj.

“I could ask the pretty fucking boy, if he has heard something from Artur”, he thought angrily. “But he is certainly not here to talk about politics. That arrogant idiot...”
Julia saw Frank from afar and waved her hand, but the young man just gave her an insincere smile and went into a side street.
”Stupid slut!”, he hissed quietly.
This unpleasant sight significantly increased Frank`s depressed mood in the coming days and weeks. He spent the winter in his hardly heated house and rarely visited the Wildens. Soon, he had found the alcohol as his new best friend and asked John Throphy to bring him still more beer and vodka from his trips to the neighboring regions.

In the bleak winter nights, Frank`s nightmares often crawled out of the dark corners of his subconsciousness again. More often than in other times of the year. Sometimes, the strange visions which besieged Frank`s skull in the black of night, were bizarre and vague. Occasionally, his parents, his sister or even Nico appeared. Apart from that, a lot of other confusing things distressed his mind. One vision still remained in his memory for many days.
As he walked through an unfamiliar city, he saw a long line of people who were chained together. Men in gray shirts drove them forward, leading them out of the town to a large field. Frank walked along beside the line of people and did not know what to make of it. After a while, he had reached the end of the line and suddenly stood in front of a long-drawn-out stone wall.
“Forward! The next!”, yelled one of the uniformed men and led some of the people to the wall.
He blindfolded them, while his comrades came from behind to help him. They had guns in their hands which they loaded

now. Finally, the men in the gray shirts formed a long squad column.
“Fire!”, it resounded and a volley mowed down the people in front of the wall. The dead were pulled away and brought to a huge pit, where countless corpses were already lying. And so it went on. Salvo after salvo broke the silence, but the line of people did not seem to become shorter. Frank looked at this scenario in horror and disgust, but the people, standing around him, seemed not to notice him.
Suddenly he heard a familiar voice behind him, turned around and saw Artur Tschistokow.
“Frank, nice that you also have come!”, said the leader of the *Rus*.
”What are you doing here?”, asked Frank with a trembling voice.
“We have won!”, yelled Artur joyfully.
“But what are you doing?”, stammered Kohlhaas confusedly.
Tschistokow clapped him on the shoulder and replied: “What we do? All that is necessary!”
“I do not understand...”, said the young man from Ivas.
“Do not ask so much! Better help us! We have a lot of work to do!”, answered the Russian.
The rebel leader thrusted a rifle into Frank`s hand. Kohlhaas paused and looked at him, still disturbed. An uneasy feeling had gripped his throat and he did not know what to say at all.
“We have won, Frank! You can be happy, my friend! And now, finally, help us!”, demanded Artur.
Another firing command was shouted, and the sound of guns followed. Artur Tschistokow disappeared again, leaving Frank alone with the rifle.

The dreamer`s eyes opened wide and he let out a loud snort. Distraughtly, he clung to his blanket and looked around. ”Will it all end like this?”, asked Frank himself.

Cold Days

While Alfred was totally drunken at Wilden`s New Year`s Eve party, Frank stayed at home - alone. Today he was not in celebratory mood at all. Any hope, concerning the political struggle and also his private life, seemed to be lost. It was a disaster. And this dark winter was particularly harsh. Not only in Frank`s soul, but even in reality. A brutal cold wave had swept over Russia and the surrounding lands. The Baltic countries were buried under a thick layer of snow, since the end of February 2034.
In this terrible time, thousands of homeless people and beggars froze or starved to death in the cities of Eastern Europe. And the number of those, who could not afford a roof over their heads and had no more chance to find a job, was still growing. It was similar in large parts of Europe, but the situation in Eastern Europe was worst. A black cloud of discontent came over the land, as it had never been before.
In addition, the new year had started with a massive tax hike, in order to briefly fill up the ever-empty coffers of the sub-prefecture “Baltic-Belarus”. However, a large part of the funds was spent to pay debts and was issued just as quick as it had been taken, while the “Global Bank Trust”, the international fiscal authority, increased the pressure on the sector without mercy.
Slowly, Belarus and the Baltic states became a large fertile soil for unrest, but Artur Tschistokow seemed to have vanished. He was still somewhere in the background and shunned the public for obvious reasons. Instead, he wrote a book called “The Way of the Rus” in which he described his political goals. Furthermore, it was also some kind of biography. In this months, the young politician wrote down

his thoughts like one possessed, and soon his book had more than 1200 pages.
And Artur Tschistokow was willing to come back. The wave of persecution and the brutal destruction of his organization, had only temporarily demoralized him, but then his visions of a free Russia and his fanatical will had returned again, leaving him no longer time to rest.
Meanwhile, his parents and his older brother had been murdered during the last great execution campaign of the GSA after a long time in prison. One of his comrades had told him about the fate of his family. It had happened at the beginning of the year.
Apparently, the autorithies had allowed his relatives some kind of last respite before they had finally killed them, because they had hoped that Tschistokow would leave his hiding place to search for them. But he had not been that stupid and after a while, his parents and his brother had not been useful anymore – in the eyes of the GSA.
Artur Tschistokow`s hate had grown to the extreme during these winter months, and he had increasingly become aware that his life would only make sense, if he would fulfill his political mission. Finally, he built up a rock-solid, fanatic resoluteness to fight now with all the consequences. Victory or death – this was Tschistokow`s new credo.

Frank, Alfred, Wilden and Sven were already waiting in HOK`s study since half an hour, eagerly longing for the ringing of the phone. This morning, Artur Tschistokow had contacted the computer scientist on a well encrypted line and had asked for Wilden. HOK had explained that he needed to get the village boss first, and the rebel leader had promised that he would call them at 13.00 o`clock again.
“It`s end of February! Where has this guy been all the time?”, asked Frank the others.

“Don`t ask me such things. But hiding has been the only chance for him. We should be glad that the authorities haven`t found a trace so far which leads them to Ivas”, said the village boss and stared at the phone.
Now it was 13.20 o`clock, the display lit up brightly and a ringing ended the expectant silence.
”Hello?”, Wilden took the call with the hidden ID.
“Thorsten, it`s me!”
”Ha, ha! You`re alive! Where have you been all the time?”
”I was hiding. I will come to Ivas. Tomorrow!”
“Great! We all look forward to see you. When will you come?”
”About 15.00 o`clock – if it`s okay...”
“Sure! See you tomorrow!”
The elderly man hung up and happily looked at the others, while Frank let out a cry of joy.
“Thank God, he is still alive!”, said Kohlhaas with ease and sat down again.
“If they would have caught him, we would already know it from TV. What do you think?”, returned Alf.
“That`s certainly true! Damn, I`m just happy!”, said Frank who rose his fist like an Olympian.

Artur Tschistokow bowed politely and winked at Mrs. Wilden who had opened the door. Then he came up the stairs and entered the study of the village boss, where a dozen men welcomed him joyfully.
“I`m among the living. Back from exile!”, joked the Russian.
“Where have you been?”, asked Frank.
“Near Khoyniki, in southern Belarus. There, the police do not believe that I am. They were searching for me mostly in the north of Belarus!”
“Ha, ha! Peter has organized it again, right?”, said Wilden and contentedly leaned back in his chair.

“Yes, he and other friends!”
And now? Will you continue your struggle against the system?”, asked Sven.
Tschistokow paused for some seconds, staring at the men in front of him with a severe look. Then he answered: “Yes, of course! Now harder than ever! Do you understand?”
Artur opened his briefcase and took out a huge stack of papers. He gave them to Wilden.
“What`s that?”
”That is manuscript of my book, which I have written in the last months. It is called in German “The Way of the Rus”, my political manifesto. You can read it, if you want. One day I`ll let it make...”
“Print!”, added Frank, winking at Tschistokow.
“Yes, I will let print the book!”
“Seems to be very interesting”, murmured Wilden. “Let`s see if my Russian is really that good.”
“The crisis of economy is growing in Belarus. It is getting worse”, said Tschistokow.
“Yes, there is probably more potential for us than one year ago”, remarked the village boss.
“Right! Even more poor people, more problems in all the land!”
”But your organization has been destroyed, hasn`t it?”, asked a young man in the background.
“It is not broke, many structures are still there, my friends. I will now fight to win. No longer will I hide!”, grumbled Tschistokow full of bitterness.
“They have said on TV that you have committed suicide, some weeks ago. The report about your death has also been on the English-speaking channels”, said Sven.
“Oh, I haven`t noticed this...”, marveled Alf.
“But it is true. I have seen it!”, returned Frank too.

”No, I`m still alive. Suicide? Pah! They lie! They are still lying on television! They have killed my parents and my brother in January. I know it from one of my friends”, hissed the blond man and bared his teeth.
Frank inwardly winced, when Tschistokow told this. He knew too well, how he had to feel now. The same cruel calamity had come over him, a few years ago.
“They have arrested my parents and my brother to get me out of hiding. Do you understand, what I mean?”, continued Tschistokow.
”Yes! I know what you mean!”, whispered Frank, feeling the burning hatred inside his mind. “They have done the same to me! Those fucking rats!”
“This is our “disaster”...in English”, said Artur with a cynical smile.
“Fate! This is our fate”, answered Frank and nodded approvingly.
”They will pay! If we ever have the power in Belarus, those bastards will pay! I will spill their blood! I swear it!”, muttered the Russian with staring eyes.

Meanwhile, the situation had calmed down a bit. At least, concerning the immense pressure that the authorities and the GSA had put on the supporters of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* in the last six months.
Apparently, Medschenko and his staff thought that the organization had completely been destroyed, after they had detained or shot thousands of suspects in the whole country. But they had not caught the head of the movement, and that had become an even more radical and resolute fanatic and revolutionary than before. Now, Artur Tschistokow was ready for anything and was not afraid of the thought to be led to the scaffold one day. He knew, deep inside, that a man like him had to make his peace with God

early enough, before he started to walk the path of resistance against an almighty enemy.
In the first week of March, Artur and Peter made their way to Minsk. In a suburb in the west of the city, they had rounded up about hundred members of the organization. It was Tschistokow`s first attempt since months, to gather the disoriented men under the banner of the dragon head again.

Many had been beside themselves with joy, when they heard that the rebel leader was active again, and would visit them in Minsk. Finally, they met in an empty sports hall in the outskirts of the city.
About a dozen men had rifles. They stared through a dirty window at the rain-wet parking lot in front of the building. If the police would dare to show up today, then some people would die. Tschistokow had already said this to his men, because the new way should be the violent one.
The politician briefly talked with some of the group leaders from the largest city of the sub-sector “Belarus-Baltic”, then Michael Tcherezow, one of the section commanders, went to the speaker`s desk at the and of the hall. After he had welcomed the activists, it was Tschistokow`s turn. The blond man paused of some minutes, and stared at his followers with a black look, feeling how a fanatical will began to grip his heart. Finally he started his speech and his pervasive voice slowly became louder.

“My comrades! My friends!
When we started with our struggle, a few years ago, we were nothing but a tiny band of barely 300 men across the whole country, despaired of the present and driven by sorrows, frustration and distress. We came from all parts of society with one common aim: We wanted to safe the future of our nation, and make it free and independent!

Now we are almost destroyed. We have almost been wiped out from history - they have just made us anonymous. The system has fought us with all its weapons, arrested and murdered our men, inundated us with lies and propaganda. They have tried a lot to destroy us – and obviously our name and our symbol have already been enough, that the system had to use such desperate measures.
In our helplessness, we stand up again now. We defend, what is perhaps already fallen, and then we go from the defense to a new impetuous attack!
Give us back our freedom! Give us back our country! We will not rest until the world system is dead or we are! We have nothing to regret and we will not give up! We will continue our fight! Even with more fanaticism and selflessness as our enemies can imagine!
Their terror just makes us hard. And one day, we will not forgive! We won`t give them mercy, as they have never given mercy to us - to us, our entire nation and also the rest of the world! It will be a brutal fight till death, and we are ready to carry this burden till the end! The time for compromises is over!
I have spoken with many of our comrades in the last days. Some had been imprisoned, others had been tortured, in order to disclose more informations about me.
However, some of our brothers had not even had the pleasure to be detained at all, they had been killed immediately. We will see them again, one day in heaven, and then we can hopefully tell them: “We have finally won this endless fight, down on earth. Now, our children grow up as free men and women, in a country that belongs to them!
Who is not ready to join this fight to the last bullet, shall go now, and may never come back! Who loves his own life more than the life of our nation, shall disappear forever!

All the others may come with me, follow me. Even if I have to lead you through hell. But I know, that at the end of this terrible way, a new day is waiting for us!
We will not surrender! We will not give up! They have to kill all of us to silence us again! And we will kill them all too, if the balance of power will change one day! There are no more compromises to make, my brothers! All that remains, is one single way: Victory or death!"

Thunderous applause followed. These were exactly the words, Tschistokow`s men wanted to hear. At least, most of them. A few of his comrades, however, were disturbed, because Tschistokow radiated an uncanny resoluteness and a fanatical willpower on this day. His words seemed to sound pathetic and exaggerated, at first sight, but he meant them deadly serious.
The leader of the *Rus* spent the rest of the month with a tireless journey through all major cities of the country, where he summoned his followers, hammering the principles of the new phase of his struggle into their heads.
Many of his former comrades had left the organization, but those who had remained loyal to him, were sworn to the new, hard way with almost insane stubbornness. Now Tschistokow wanted to take the gloves off, and make his organization to a mass movement. Meanwhile, the economic situation had dramatically deteriorated and now it was time to harvest. However, this harvest should become bloody.

In Ivas, life went on as always. Artur`s visit had built up the morale of the villagers and Wilden stayed in close contact with the Russians. The group of young men under the leadership of Sven, which had supported the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* in the last months, became once

more active and soon all were enthusiastic again. In the rainy April, they started a new publicity campaign for the *Rus* with feverish eagerness in Lithuania and Belarus. Sven`s group left Ivas for weeks, to help the Russian comardes in several cities.
But Frank and Alfred observed Tschistokow`s return to the political stage still from the distance, and only visited some smaller meetings of his organization.
At the end of April, Artur Tschistokow led a rally through the streets of Brest. About 1000 of his followers came and marched through downtown for an hour. There were heavy clashes with the police and two dozen people were killed.
One week later, the men of the freedom movement appeared with about 300 men in Pinsk, in front of a factory, in order to encourage the workers to start a strike. Two spontaneous protest marches followed in Slutsk and Begoml.
The media reported nationwide about the re-appearance of Tschistokow and the authorities stroke back with arrests, interrogations and even executions. This meant that Artur finally ordered his followers to use violence as well now. In return, two newspaper editors, who had been loyal to the regime, were shot by masked men on open street in Minsk.
Furthermore, a judge who had sentenced several *Rus* to death, was killed by an unknown hitman a few days later. All in all, many desperate Belarusians were impressed by the courage and resoluteness of Tschistokow, and the ranks of his movement slowly filled up again. His decision to accept the challenge, to fight a brutal and completely overpowering system, even caused some admiration among a part of the Belarusian policemen. When his men eventually managed to march through three towns simultaneously, the media gave the *Rus* more attention than ever before. In reverse, the rebel leader publicly shouted out his claims and

attacked the Medschenko government with hard words. And this was more than uncomfortable for the regime.
Now, tens of thousands of people got to hear unpleasant truths, the media had always kept under wraps. Medschenko and his politcal staff were openly exposed and their crimes became public. The most Belarusians who heard Tschistokow`s speeches started to think and in some parts of the country, the television propaganda had more and more problems to convince people of the “evil character of the freedom movement”.
Apart from that, the Belarusian industry collapsed in spring 2034, in an dimension, nobody had expected before. Tens of thousands of Belarusian workers lost their jobs, whole factory complexes were closed and outsourced to other countries. In return, the food prices and fees continued to increase. A dark cloud of wrath was subliminally pulsing in the minds of many people, and there was no hope that the social situation would become better in the next years.
Moreover, a growing number of Belarusians had a violent aversion to the non-European foreigners, the Medschenko government had brought into their country. So the tensions between the native Russians and the immigrants increased, especially in the bigger cities. Criminal gangs from the non-Russian parts of the old Soviet Union, Anatolia or even Africa were still flooding the country and became a talking point, because of robbery, murder, drug trafficking and other crimes. Some neighborhoods in the larger cities of Belarus had meanwhile become dangerous ghettos full of poverty, crime and violence. The explosive mood in the country heated up, inching its way towards a big explosion.

“We`re going to demonstrate in every bigger city in the country now”, said Tschistokow and took a sip of tea.

Today they had met in Frank`s house. Wilden was also there and had brought a map of Belarus. Warm sun rays came through the kitchen window and lit up the old, still dilapidated room in a pleasant light.
“And you want to hold a rally here?”, asked Frank, pointing his finger at Verkhnedvinsk, a small town near the Lithuanian border.
”Yes, I start in the north of Belarus and then go to the south, till the border of Ukraine”, explained the leader of the freedom movement confidently.
“But then, the authorities will always know, where you will appear next...”, said Bäumer, still puzzled.
“What`s about Minsk?”, questioned Frank.
“They shall know it, no more hiding. In the small towns are only a few policemen and we will be more and more people. Then there will be a confrontation! So what?”, remarked Artur grimly.
“And Minsk?”, returned Kohlhaas.
“In Minsk, we will not demonstrate. It`s too dangerous! Not even in the other very large cities, such as Vitebsk, Gomel and so on...”
Artur furthermore explained some details of his plan. He wanted to callenge the power of the system at first in the rural regions of Belarus. Wilden liked the idea and praised the resoluteness of the young politician. Nevertheless, Frank and Alfred were still not completely convinced of Artur`s ideas.
On 05.03.2034, the *Rus* started with a first protest march in Verkhnedvinsk, a sleepy little town with barely 15000 inhabitants in the north of Belarus. About 2000 men could be rounded up by Tschistokow, who delivered a speech which lasted over two hours.
The response of the population was enormous and the politician was welcomed by many people as a liberator,

while the small number of policemen abstained from attacking the protesters and just filmed the rally from the distance. This was an initial success.
One week later, the *Rus* marched through the streets of Disna. Sven and the other young people from Ivas had distributed thousands of leaflets around the town and had earned a lof of sympathies from the farmer`s families who were fighting for their livelihood here. Finally a rally with over 800 people followed. Frank and Alfred were also there this time. Again, everything went smoothly, because the few cops avoided another confrontation with the *Rus*.
Two weeks later, there were demonstrations in Kobylnik and Dokshitsky in the northwest of the country. The rallies took place simultaneously and one of them was led by Tschistokow himself, while the other had been organized by Michael Tcherezov from Minsk.
A total of about 3000 people had come to both events. In Kobylink, it finally came to a first clash with two squadrons of the regional police. An officer and three demonstrators were shot, dozens of protesters and policemen were wounded. Furthermore, some *Rus* were arrested this time.
At the beginning of June, Artur Tschistokow made a last demonstration in Lepel, a rundown town in the south of Vitebsk. Frank and Alfred accompanied the march of about 1000 men and women as armed guardsmen. It all went quiet and the *Rus* earned much sympathy from the inhabitants of the city.
After that final event for this month, the leader of the freedom movement disappeared for some weeks and continued to work on the inner structure of his organization. Occasionally, he came to Ivas and discussed various things with Wilden. Meanwhile, the restless Russian dissident had found a new, secret printing office for his newspaper and

published the paper, with Wilden`s financial assistance, in an increasing circulation.
Apart from that, his movement had recovered during the last months and was growing again. All new members were now definitely obliged to appear at meetings and rallies with gray shirts and black trousers - to demonstrate the unity of the *Rus*. Finally, Tschistokow even published his book “The Way of the Rus” which he had written during the winter months.
He sold it not only to his followers who were eager to read it, but also sent it anonymously, in printed form or as electronic file, to thousands of senior officials, police chiefs and high rank administrators to give them a closer look on his worldview.
The media immediately reacted on the campaign and warned the people about Tschistokow`s “delusions” and his “poor piece of workmanship, full of hatespeech and deceitful propaganda”.
Nevertheless, he had some success. During the next rally in the small border town of Surazh, some of the few police officers, who observed the march of over 4000 demonstrators, were unusually friendly and behaved conspicuously courteous. Even Frank and Alfred were impressed by the bold appearance of their Russian comrades and flanked the crowd this time again as armed guardsmen. One day, as they hoped, also a part of the underpaid and frustrated Belarusian policemen would join their movement. This would really be a great thing.

Special Forces Frank

"Slowly the whole thing takes shape”, said Frank with a smile and turned to Alf. Bäumer gleefully took another sip of ice cold lemonade, agreed without saying a word and looked across the square in the middle of Ivas.
“Do you want to have another baguette?”, they heard from behind.
“Yes, please!”, answered Frank.
It was Steffen de Vries, the Belgian. Today, the two men had sat down in the new and only cafe of their little village. Steffen de Vries, the sprightly Fleming, had opened it last month. The chubby, cheerful man had converted one of the old, empty shops in the center of the village into a makeshift cafe. Next to them, there was another shop, in which the Belgian with the reddish beard and the broad cheeks sold all sorts of useful odds and ends.
Steffen gave Frank a small plate with a steaming salami baguette on it, and Kohlhaas expectantly opened his eyes. Then he almost devoured the delicious food like a hungry python.
”You have become a real entrepreneur, right?”, he said, loudly smacking .
“Yes, the cafe has been a good idea, hasn`t it?”, answered de Vries.
”Does it run?”, joked Alf.
“Well, the Dreher family has already been here today. With their four children”, retorted the Fleming and grinned.
“Better than nothing!”, remarked Frank.
“I won`t become a millionaire, but I like my job...”, added Steffen and disappeared again.

Frank`s eyes wandered across the squalid village square. Between the cobblestones, weed was sprouting out of every crack. The old church, opposite the cafe, had still more fallen into ruin in the last years and the memorial stone in the middle of the square was still overgrown with all sorts of scrub.
”We should clean up a little bit here, and whip our village into shape”, said Frank.
“Yes, you can suggest it to Wilden”, replied Alf.
“Too bad, that the church is just crumbling, actually it`s a nice building. Perhaps we should restore it”, commented Kohlhaas.
“Hardly anyone in Ivas needs an old church!”
“We could make a nice meeting room of it. What do you think?”
“Okay, if you like...”
“I will speak with Thorsten. It hurts me somehow, if an old building is just rotting in front of us. The church dosen`t deserve such a fate...”
Bäumer looked puzzled. “Church? Fate? You probably become a bit sentimental at once, dude!”
“No, but I respect old buildings!”, Frank replied sullenly, feeling misunderstood.
“Wow! Look at this!”, Alf suddenly pointed towards the other end of the village square. Julia and another person approached.
A few moments later, Frank could recognize who held the hand of the pretty daughter of the village boss, walking across the square with a big smile. It was Viktor, the handsome Russian from Grodno.
“What is that guy doing here?”, growled Kohlhaas.
“Can`t you see it, my friend? He seems to have visited Miss Wilden”, replied Alf and watched Frank`s scowl.

“Bloody hell!”, muttered Kohlhaas quietly. “Do you think they are a couple now?”
“You can go and ask them...”
“Fuck you, idiot! I don`t want to talk to this arrogant slut and her new lover. She can kiss my ass! I don`t care about her anymore!”
“Sounds different...”, said Alf.
“Shut up!”, hissed his friend.
“You haven`t given Julia the time of the day in the last months. Maybe this has been a mistake”, remarked Bäumer and raised his forefinger.
“What was a damn mistake? I won`t run after her!”, ranted Kohlhaas, clutching to the tablecloth.
“Maybe it would have been better, if you have done it, Frank!”
“Maybe what? Maybe women are stupid? Yes, could be right!”
Julia and Viktor were walking past them, waving their hands happily. Then they disappeared behind the old church. Kohlhaas called Steffen deVries and paid the price for three baguettes and two glasses of lemonade with his fake Scanchip. Alf paid too, and followed his angry friend. Now, even the comforting warm August sun could not exhilarate Frank anymore.

A few days later, Frank and Alf decided to spend more time with supporting Tschistokow`s movement. They even promised Wilden to take part in all protest marches, rallies and meetings – from now on.
Furthermore, Frank made the village boss the suggestion to renovate the old church to make it to some kind of meeting place for the village community. The former businessman agreed to the idea and several dozen men and women started to clean up the little square and to

remove the abundant weed. Finally, they even restored the dilapidated church. They piled up a big mountain of rubble and rubbish in front of the building and repaired the broken roof. At the end of the month, they had done a lot of renovation work and eventually started to face the walls of the church with wooden panels. The old pictures and sculptures inside were cleaned and freed from dust, and Frank was always taken by a tang of awe, when he looked at them.

In September, they were visited by Tschistokow and his friend Peter again. Wilden had told the Russians in a long conversation that Frank and Alfred had meanwhile decided to serve the freedom movement as full members. Shortly afterwards, Tschistokow immediately asked to talk to them in person.
Kohlhaas opened the door with surprise and let Tschistokow and his brawny companion into the house. Today, the blond Russian was grinning from ear to ear, while Frank was puzzled. Even Peter Ulljewski could not resist a small grin. Then Alf appeared in the hallway and welcomed the two guests from Belarus.
“You two also want to become really active in our movement now?”, asked Tschistokow and sat down on the old couch.
“Yes, we want!”, answered Frank, looking at Artur who still had this stupid grin on his face.
“You two...”, said the Russian, winking at them.
“What`s up?” Alf shook his head blankly.
“Special Forces Frank and Special Forces Alfred, ha, ha!”, laughted Tschistokow, slapping his thighs.
“What?”
”We can use you good!”, Artur winked at them again, while Peter nudged him with his elbow.
“Special Forces...?”

”Ha, ha! Yes, I know everything. You have killed Wechsler and that GCF general on Okinawa. Great!”, shouted Tschistokow with utter enthusiasm.
Frank rolled his eyes and moaned: “Why can`t Wilden just shut up, just one time!”
“Thorsten has told me everything. Damn! You are true heroes!”, said the Russian full of excitement.
“Damn! We have told Wilden to keep his mouth shut. It`s always the same with him...”, grouched Bäumer.
“You can trust me, don`t worry!”, laughed Tschistokow.
“I know, but nevertheless, we asked Wilden not to talk about all these things”, grumbled Frank.
“Well, I have asked him about you and he has told me. You are heroes to us all! Heroes!”, answered the blond Russian reverently, stood up and clapped Frank and Alf on the shoulders.
Finally, the two “heroes” reacted a little embarrassed and Frank proudly smiled to himself.
“You could lead my guardsmen! What do you think?”, suggested Tschistokow. “That`s the right job for you!”
”We will think about your offer, Artur. Anyhow, thanks!”, muttered Bäumer.

The blond Russian did not give up and tried to convince them at any cost. Soon he behaved like Wilden, when he was in top form. Frank and Alfred finally agreed and were internally quite flattered by this offer too. Then they talked with Tschistokow about the details and were more than amazed, when the Russian explained that he had already built up an impressing force of armed guardsmen.
He had meanwhile planned another rally in Baranovichi. Tschistokow expected about 6000 people. However, clashes with the police were also realistic, because Baranovichi was no more small town in a rural area and not

far from Minsk. This was a real provocation for the Medschenko government!
In this city, a lot of factories and production complexes stood before their closure and accordingly, there was a great potential of dissatisfied men and women. The rally should be a similar show of force like the march through Nowopolozk, as the *Rus* thought. Tschistokow did not even try to keep any secrecy and called the people up to join the demonstration on 28.09.2034 at 15.00 o`clock at the town square in the city center. Even Wilden had no good feeling in view of a provocation of the authorities like this.
The media reacted immediately and spreaded the news of the planned protest march through Baranovichi to the last corner of the administrative sector “Eastern Europe”.
Now, Tschistokow was expecting a massive police presence and he told his followers to arm themselves and prepare for bloody street fights. Finally, he even proclaimed that the time was ripe for the march on Minsk. But in the end, it all came different.
Already at 13.00 o`clock, almost 5000 demonstrators had gathered in the inner city of Baranovichi and some hundreds of them had guns, rifles and other weapons. A sea of dragon head flags filled the town square, and every minute more protesters came out of the side streets.
Frank, Alfred, Wilden and the others from Ivas had come much earlier to Baranovichi to get an overview of the situation. And what they saw was strange – there were only a few policemen.
“Something is wrong here!”, said Wilden, looking at the crumbling, old buildings around him.
“I just hope, that it all doesn`t end in a bloodbath...”, answered Kohlhaas and left his friends to search for Artur. Bäumer followed him. After a few minutes, they had found

the Russian in a throng of mummed people. The leader of the *Rus* smiled at them and waved them nearer.
“Ah, Frank and Alfred! You can have a window place here”, joked Tschistokow.
Then, the Russian took a long look at the two Germans. Both had shouldered their rifles and were completely clothed after the dress code, gray shirts and black trousers, just as Tschistokow wanted it.
“This is Olaf, he is head of the group of Baranovichi”, said the rebel leader and pointed at a man next to him.
“Hello, I` m Frank!”
“Olaf!”, muttered the Russian, staring straight ahead.
“There are just a few cops here. I can`t understand this”, remarked Bäumer puzzledly and shrugged his shoulders.
“I do not know, maybe they are scared”, replied Tschistokow with a grin and stroked through his sweaty blond hair. Then he shouted an order at some young men and disappeared in the crowd again.

At 15.00 o`clock, the protest march started with loud yelling. Large banners with slogans like “Artur Tschistokow - Now!” or “Jobs and freedom for all Russians!” were carried by the men in the front row.
Thorsten Wilden and the rest of the rebels from Ivas stayed in the rear of the demonstration, while Sven and his men flanked the march as guardsmen. Frank, who was walking behind Tschistokow, tried to estimate how many people had come to this city today. About 6000 people, maybe even 8000 or more. It was a very long human worm which was crawling through the streets of Baranovichi.
Behind Kohlhaas, the Russian comrades yelled their slogans at the top of their lungs, Artur was silent, however, because he had to spare his voice for the following speech.

Frank and Alf remained quiet too, watching out for policemen and other dangers.
“Where are those cops? This isn`t normal. Everyone knows that we are here”, mused Kohlhaas and craned his head upwards.
They marched about two kilometers through downtown, passing a lot of cheering citizens and many dilapidated houses. However, not every inhabitant of the city was well-disposed towards them. Some even shouted “Murderer! Murderer!” out the windows and meant Tschistokow. At a street corner, some young foreigners threw stones at the demonstrators and finally ran away, when they came closer. Apparently, the incitement of the media against the freedom movement had already born fruits in some parts of the population.
The last rallies, which had exclusively been in rural areas and small towns, had been unspectacular. But here in Baranovichi, the atmosphere was sometimes unpleasant. In the larger cities, especially in Minsk, the *Rus* had to take into account not only clashes with the police, but even with some incited people or hostile foreigners.
Nevertheless, this demostration looked impressive, because of the great number of protesters, the countless flags and the uniformed guardsmen and members. Finally, the crowd stopped at a large square and Artur Tschistokow prepared himself for his speech.
Ugly apartment blocks and abandoned stores surrounded them here. Now, several hundred cheering people came out of the side streets and joined the rally. They were quite excited to hear the famous, notorious dissident with their own ears.

“Hey, something is wrong here. Shit! Where the hell are the cops?”, whispered Frank, staring at Bäumer who stood just

a few meters behind Tschistokow. The beefy German scratched his head and came to him.
“You`re right. This is absolutely strange. I have expected thousands of cops, the full program, anti-riot squads and so on...”, returned Alf, looking uneasy.
“I start now with my speech!”, said Tschistokow to them and the crowd formed a giant circle around him, so that the whole square, including the side streets, was completely packed with people.
“Damn! It must be a trap. I just have a very bad vibe about this!”, said Frank and was gripped by a wave of nervousness.
“What shall happen? The cops won`t attack us, Frank. Just look at this mass of people!”, calmed him Bäumer.
Tschistokow`s voice shook the crowd and a murmur went through it, while his supporters were waving their flags and banners. The tall man, wearing a black leather coat this time, shouted his political passion and all his inner rage into the microphone and began with the usual accusations against the World Government and its political representatives in Belarus.
Meanwhile, Frank searched the area around him for possible clues of hidden dangers with the instinct of a hunter. But he could not see very much, because he was surrounded by countless people. So his only chance was to look up.
On the one hand, the constant peering was his job as an armed guardsman, and on the other hand his instinct told him that something unexpected would still happen today. The young rebel from Ivas narrowed his eyes to slits and beheld the roofs of the houses which surrounded the square. Again and again, he turned around, although he did not really know what he was looking for.

“What are you doing, buddy?”, asked Bäumer and shook his head.
”Oh, I`m just looking around, Alf!”
“Are you waiting for some Skydragons? That`s just ridiculous...”, said Alf sardonically.
Meanwhile, Tschistokow seemed to be in extasy and was hammering his political claims into the heads of his followers. Frank could understand a lot of the Russian speech. His continuous lessons with Wilden had not been in vain, beyond all doubt.
He turned his gaze back to the houses that surrounded the square, while some evil forebodings rumbled in his belly. Frank was sure that something was wrong.
“They have set a trap for us. I feel it...”, he said quietly to himself.
”What?”, shouted Alf into his ear.
“Nothing, forget it!”
Then, Tschistokow`s impassioned speech finally came to an end and screams and clapping came from everywhere. The leader of the *Rus* traditionally intoned the song “My Russia”, which was always sung at the end of a rally.
A loud singing resounded out of the throats of thousands of moved people. At that moment, the mass floated on a wave of emotions and even the most guardsmen were completely lost in thoughts, singing this lovely old folk song.
Only Frank seemed to worry and stared at the roofs of the houses, again and again. Suddenly he recognized something strange in the corner of his eye. A small, dark spot had moved on a rooftop and had then disappeared behind a long chimney. Kohlhaas gaze had followed the spot and was now trying to find it again. Shortly afterwards, he could see a tiny, black line next to the chimney.
“A barrel of a rifle!”, it flashed through his mind.

Now the dark spot was moving again. It was a man who was lurking there on the roof. The adrenaline rushed through Frank`s body and he knew instinctively what to do. With a long leap, he jumped on Tschistokow and pushed him aside. Just at that moment, a bullet hissed only a few centimeters past the head of the Russian. The tall, blond man fell to the ground, because of Frank`s massive impetus, while some Russians jumped sidewards.
Two more bullets followed and hit the asphalt behind Tschistokow. A third projectile hit Frank in the left lower leg and he screamed in pain. With a distorted face, he crawled behind the human wall to find cover. The people around him scattered in sheer panic.
“There`s a sniper! Sniper! Sniper!”, yelled Frank, pointing at the sky.
Meanwhile, some guardsmen had also noticed the man on the roof and fired with their assault rifles in the direction of the house. But the sniper disappeared in a flash and soon he was too far away to be pursued anymore.
Bäumer made a beeline for Frank: “Are you okay?”
“All right, I have been hit in the lower leg. Don`t worry...”, moaned Kohlhaas.
Tschistokow slowly stood up again. He looked like being struck by lightning and was completely speechless with terror. He was just snatched from the jaws of death. Wilden, Sven, Peter Ulljewski and other confidants of the politician struggled through the crowd and were totally confused. Only because of Frank`s wariness, the Russian dissident had survived this assassination attempt.

The rebel leader had always foreseen an incident like this, but when it happened, he had been completely stunned, as he later admitted. It had been the worst shock of his whole life yet. During the rest of the day, there were heavy riots in

Baranovichi. Several hundred young Belarusians thought that they had to avenge the assassination attempt on their leader. So they started a witch-hunt on the few policemen in the city, killing two of them and throwing Molotov cocktails into an administration building.
The men from Ivas left Baranovichi as fast as they could and reached their home village unharmed - except for Frank who had a bullet deep in the flesh of his lower leg. The young man could not be brought to a regular hospital and had to be doctored with primitive means. Finally, Alf cut out the projectile with a knife and disinfected the wound with alcohol.

Limping and Hoping

Frank Kohlhaas had to rest for the next weeks. At the end of October, he could finally leave the sickbed and was more or less able to walk again. During this time he was visited by most of the villagers who congratulated him on his latest achievement. Of course, also Artur Tschistokow, who had slowly overcome the shock, came to Ivas and thanked Frank wholeheartedly that he had saved his life. From now on, the two men had a special friendship.
Julia Wilden visited Frank too, and seemed to be very concerned about him. She brought him flowers, books and once even a homemade cake. The injured man was inwardly pleased about her care, but he tried to show not too much of his happyness, because he was still huffy and Julia should know it. So he remained sober and taciturn. Moreover, he had the wildest theories on his mind about her and Viktor. Frank had focused his thoughts only on the political struggle in Lithuania and Belarus, and had just forgotten the world beyond policy.
Only now, when he was lying in bed, after Alf had put the TV in his bedroom, sweeping and scary activities became aware in the distance. The approximately 700 channels from around the world which Frank could receive here, gave him more or less an idea, how the future in “Eastern Europe” would look like.
The World Government was already trying to register the population of North America with the new implantation Scanchips since one year. Meanwhile, the old Scanchip had been replaced by tiny electronic implants, that could fulfill all its functions. These new markers were the final step towards the total control of the masses, and the media

enthusiastically praised the new improved implantation Scanchip as “the greatest technical achievement of the 21th century”.
In “Central Europe”, the first mass registrations had also begun several months ago and the global media machinery had started a huge publicity campaign to get the consent and the goodwill of the people.
But the cunning propaganda did not always have the desired effect. Large parts of the population of North America and Western Europe did not join the registrations voluntarily and there were some riots and protests in the bigger cities. Moreover, the World Government did not want to take too drastic measures against the protesters and tried to “convince” the population of the new, improved Scanchip.
The worldwide registration process could last many years – step by step, piece by piece, as the Lodge Brothers had planned it.
Nevertheless, during the first half of the year 2034 over 73 million people in North America had already been registered with implanted Scanchips. The first registrations with the new medium in the administrative sector “Eastern Europe” were planned for January 2035. Then, also the population of Russia, Belarus and all the other countries should become a flock of marked lambs - under the command of the “chosen few”.
Occasionally, the first propaganda reports came on television, to psychologically prepare the population for the coming registration. And it would come. The Lodge Brothers tolerated no dissent.

Meanwhile, Artur Tschistokow continued with his activities, holding further rallies, for example in Pastavy, with about 1500 participants. This time, the police was well prepared and attacked the protesters with hundreds of armored men

and even three anti-riot tanks. Finally, the *Rus* had to cancel the demonstration, before it came to serious conflicts with the security forces. Nevertheless, several activists died on that day, before they could leave the town again. Pastavy sank into chaos for several hours.
Tschistokow`s bodyguards and guardsmen, including Alf and Sven, had to shoot their way through a large number of policemen, while the leader of the *Rus* escaped from the city in a breakneck action. After this rally, another wave of arrests shook the whole country and Tschistokow had to hide again. But the young fanatic did not stop his fight and still planned further marches and rallies.
Meanwhile, Frank was able to walk again and was eager to be active for the freedom movement as soon as possible. Soon, the next demonstration followed.
“In one week, we`ll be in Krychaw. Do you really want to come with us? I mean, your leg...”, said Bäumer and gave Frank some painkillers.
“Yeah, I think so...”, moaned Kohlhaas and straightened up. Then he limped to the secondary room and sat down at the kitchen table.
“Drink something!”, said Alf, giving him a cup of hot herbal tea.
”The rally in Pastavy was a mess, wasn`t it?”, remarked Frank, holding his lower leg.
“Damn! Yes, it was a disaster. After we had gathered in the center of the town, the cops immediately attacked us. They came from everywhere and didn`t hesitate to gun us down. They even had three of these anti-riot tanks with heavy machine guns!”
“This just shows that they take us serious now. Tschistokow is still alive, and now they try to stop us with sheer brutality”, returned Kohlhaas.

“Remember that sniper! It was the GSA! It wasn`t the ordinary Belarusian police, I`m sure about that!”
“We will never know it, Alf. Anyhow, I have seen a report on ANN yesterday, this American channel. Millions of people in North America have already been registered with the new implanted Scanchips. Wilden says, there are hidden nano poison capsules inside these fucking things. Those who have been registered with this crap, can be “switched off”. The poision capsule can be activated with radio waves or something like that!”
“Nobody will ever implant me such a chip! Over my dead body!”, growled Alf and clenched his fists in rage.
“But a great number of people has already been chipped. They just believe the lies of the media, stupid lambs...”
“What`s about “Eastern Europe”?”, asked Bäumer full of sorrow.
“Probably the first registrations will start here next year!”, explained Kohlhaas.
“If they ever register us with these fucking things, we are all finished!”
”Well, we still have some time, Alf. At first, they only register all these idiots who accept this measure voluntarily. All others, who refuse the “chipping” will be forced to do it – in the long term. But this will last some years.”
Alfred`s eyes betrayed boundless anger. “They mark us like pigs! I pray to God, that I will still witness the day, when that parasite Lodge Brother scum pays for all these crimes with its own blood!”
“I think that they plan to kill a large part of the population with these new Scanchips. Damn! I`m sure! Then the media will tell us, it was a plague or something. The ideal way to solve the alleged overpopulation problem”, lectured Frank.
“I gonna blast the skull of everyone who wants to register me with this shit!”, shouted Alf, banging on the table.

In the following week, John Thorphy organized a few boxes of ammunition and new MPs in Moscow. Furthermore, Wilden had got new donations from some old friends whose names were still unknown. Frank, Alfred and about a dozen men from Ivas were on their way to Mazyr in the south of Belarus, to join another demonstration.
After the protest march in Pastavy had ended in a bloody fiasco, Tschistokow had changed his old “rally-plan”. Now he “jumped” from one part of Belarus to the other, to hinder the authorities to concentrate their police forces at one particular place. Finally over 3000 people came to Mazyr and except for minor scuffles with the police, everything went quiet. This time, the supporters of the freedom movement had huge banners with some new slogans.
“Only Artur Tschistokow can save us! Give him the power over Belarus!” or “Artur Tschistokow – The last hope!” could be read on them.
In the meantime, the politician had recovered from the terror of the assassination attempt in Baranovichi, but he knew that a thing like that could happen anytime again. From now on, his guardsmen always checked the roofs of the houses around them before they held a rally.

The year 2034 ended and when the first snowflakes came from the sky, an unfamiliar calm returned. Wilden had organized a big Christmas party, which was this time held in the old renovated church in the center of the village. The majority of the villagers came and the building was finally bursting at the seams. Artur Tschistokow, whose family no longer existed, visited them and seemed to become sentimental, when he entered the church. For some hours, they all felt like ordinary people. A feeling that was meanwhile strange for Frank and his comrades. Wilden`s moving Christmas speech which had exceptionally nothing

to do with world politics, remained in Frank`s memory for a long time. Meanwhile, he was 33 years old and mused in the long hours of the dark winter evenings a lot about his previous life, about what he had achieved - and what not.
“I`m some kind of hero - that`s all!”, he sometimes said to himself, not knowing whether he was really happy about this.
Concerning his personal aims of life, which included a woman he loved, and perhaps even a family, he had previously achieved nothing. The fight against the global system that seemed to become a never ending story, ate up his life, slowly devoured it with each passing year, like a snake a little rabbit. Frank had to avow himself that he just marked time in all private things. He became aware of it all, when he saw Julia and Viktor kissing and flirting at the New Year`s party at the Wildens.
Shortly after 24.00 o`clock, when several dozens of people had gathered in front of the house of the village boss, he finally went back home, sad and frustrated. Alf still stayed for a few hours and came back early in the morning, completely drunk.
With the beginning of February, the political struggle went on with full force. The governor of the sector “Eastern Europe” announced the start of the mass registration of the population with the new Scanchips.
Meanwhile, the sub-sector “Belarus-Baltic” had become a place of misery. The hard winter had claimed many victims among the homeless people in the cities, all across the country. Furthermore, the industry had collapsed further and a lot of production complexes had been outsourced in Third World countries. Hundreds of thousands had lost their jobs. Perhaps the year 2035 could be promising for the freedom movement and even make a revolt possible. Frank thought a lot about it, but he came to no solution. Only one thing

seemed to be certain: Some of his comrades would not witness the next New Year`s party.

“Well? What do you think about the flyer?”, asked Artur Tschistokow the village boss and looked expectantly at him.
“Hmmm...”, muttered Wilden and scratched his gray temples, while he translated the Russian text. Now he talked quietly to himself. Frank and Alfred strained their ears.
“People of Belarus, don`t let them implant you a poison-chip!”, was the headline of the leaflet. Wilden studied the text thoughtfully and finally read out aloud: “The new implanted Scanchip contains poison capsules! Defend yourselves against the criminals of the Medschenko regime and the World Government...”
Several minutes later, he was ready. “This is very good!”, he said with a smile.
“We have printed about 200000 of these pamphlets, our men distribute them everywhere in Belarus!”, explained Tschistokow.
For the 15th of February, he had planned another protest march. This time in Rechytsa, a small town in the southeast of the country, bordering the former Ukraine.
“This country has no money left anymore. Have you already heard it? It was yesterday in the television”, said the blond man
”No more money?”, returned Frank.
“Yes, the sector “Belarus-Baltic” is broke! How do you say it in German?”, asked Tschistokow.
“Bankrupt!”, explained Alf.
“Okay! Bankrupt!”, repeated the Russian and grinned.
“This is good for us. Then this sector could probably fall into chaos this year. Great! I hope so!”, said Wilden.

“I believe that, my friends. Soon, they will do not even have money to pay the policemen. No salary for police anymore! Do you understand?”, remarked Tschistokow.
“No more money for the clerks, the administrators, the police and so on?”, marveled Frank.
“Yes, yes!”, said Artur excitedly. “Only in this month there is still money. From next month, there will be perhaps no more money.”
Bäumer grinned. “Well, then the cops will think twice, before they risk their lifes against us...”
“At least, the ordinary Belarusian cops. The GCF soldiers, however, are paid by the World Government itself”, added Frank.
“We must use the situation. Many people are still very poor and now the system in Belarus crumbles still faster. Over 1,5 million Belarusians have no more jobs, no more money. Over 800000 people are homeless. It is like a boiler, the whole land is a boiler! You understand?”
„Belarus is fuming with rage!“, spoke Kohlhaas and winked at the Russian.
“Fuming?” Tschistokow looked baffled.
“Boiling! Whatever…“
„It is fuming with rage everywhere. Yes!”, shouted the Russian.

They had not misjudged the situation in Belarus. Apart from that, Artur Tschistokow thought that he had meanwhile reached a remarkable popularity among the people. The Russian dissident had almost become a prominent person, and was thereby also more vulnerable than ever before. At the beginning of the year 2035, the freedom movement was no longer an underground organization, because it had grown far too much in the last time. Hundreds of thousands of Belarusians sympathized with the *Rus*, and among these

people were no longer just the poor and disaffected. Even more and more clerks and policemen secretly hoped for a change in their country. They had finally realized, that the policy of Medschenko was leading Belarus into chaos.
Furthermore, the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* had recieved larger sums of money from anonymous donors. Artur invested the money in building up a better organization, in propaganda material and in weapons which were often bought in Russia or in the Arab countries.
The power of the occupational regime in Minsk was wavering, and fortunately the World Government paid so far only little attention to political rather unimportant countries like Belarus or Lithuania. The Lodge Brothers had other interests than caring for poor, tiny regions like the sector "Belarus-Baltic" with its barely 14 million inhabitants.
Finally, the demonstration on February 15th was a great success. The local police remained passive and some of the officers even greeted the demonstrators friendly. Over 800 members of the movement marched through the streets for three hours, almost looking like a civil war army. Frank and Alfred were thrilled.
Slowly but surely, the authorities of the sub-sector "Belarus-Baltic" had more and more problems to suppress Tschistokow`s organization, especially in the small towns and rural areas. In some villages, the *Rus* even ruled the streets now.

Physicians, who worked for the World Government and implanted the new Scanchips were declared to "enemies of the Russian nation" by the *Rus*, and Tschistokow`s men threatened to kill them, if they would not immediately stop the registrations in Belarus. Some of them were finally shot by masked men in the open street, after they had ignored the warnings of the rebels. The mass registration in Belarus

stopped before it had really begun, because the most physicians had no interest to risk their lives anymore. In the meantime, the young men from Ivas were untiringly active, above all in the smaller towns. They distributed flyers and stickers, hung up placards, and supported the freedom movement as good as they could.
In the rural regions, the conflicts with the police were meanwhile less frequent. Sven proudly told his comrades that he had given some leaftlets to a group of policemen who had read them with great interest – in broad daylight!
The cops had just smiled at him and finally said that Tschistokow was right. Medschenko and his staff feared such things more than everything else, and police officers who were caught ignoring the orders of their superiors were immediately dismissed. Nevertheless, more and more ordinary Belarusian policemen had sympathies for the *Freedom Movement of the Rus*.

“Look at that!”, Frank`s eyes seemed to fall out of their orbits. In front of him was a sea of people and flags. They all had distributed thousands of leaflets in the last days, day and night, almost without any breaks. Moreover, Tschistokow`s illegal radio stations and websites had supported the big publicity campaign for today`s rally. And it had not been in vain.
More than 20000 people had come to the outskirts of Gomel, and the large crowd was still growing.
“It is unbelievable!”, exclaimed Sven enthusiastically. “What a giant mass of people! This is the biggest rally in the history of our movement!”
“Here we go again!”, remarked Wilden, grinning from ear to ear.
Soon, the crowd started to move. Slowly, accompanied by loud screaming and chanting. Step by step, they marched

towards the inner city. Who would dare to stand in their way today, would feel the power of an angry mass, ready for everything – as Frank thought.
“This is our first rally in a real big city. I`m curious to see what`s going on today”, said Alf with a faint tang of uncertainty.
”Don`t worry!”, remarked Kohlhaas confidently. “They don`t want to fuck with a crowd like that!”
The protesters unwaveringly marched towards the city center. Huge banners showed the numerous spectators of the rally slogans like “Freedom is near!” or “Security and Work for all Russians!”.
More and more desperate men and women wanted to hear things like that, and Tschistokow shunned no danger to carry his political claims now even into the larger cities of Belarus.
Frank and Alfred hurried to the edge of the crowd and loaded their guns. Meanwhile, many of the Russian guardsmen knew their faces and treated them with respect and awe. After all, Frank had saved the life of their leader.
“Dawaj! Dawaj!”, shouted Kohlhaas and signaled the armed troopers that they should follow him to the front ranks of the endloss line of men and women. The uniformed men obeyed.
Shortly afterwards, the crowd reached a large square, after they had passed a dreary shopping zone full of rundown department stores. Here, the *Rus* encountered a great number of policemen.
“I greet you, my Belarusian brothers of the police! Please behave peacefully and we will do that too! You can listen to my speech and I hope that you will finally understand, that we want to liberate all our compatriots! Even our brothers, who work as policemen!”, shouted Tschistokow into his megaphone.

“Shit! That`s a damn big armada, and they don`t look, as if they just want to let us demonstrate here!”, said Bäumer.
Three anti-riot tanks appeared from behind a wall, five more came out of a side street.
“This rally will last no longer than one hour! I only want to deliver my speech and then we will leave Gomel immediately – and in peace. I promise it!”, yelled the leader of the *Rus*.
Now the policemen went in position behind some hastily constructed barricades and barriers, then the just waited. A tall police officer finally stepped forward, grabbed a bullhorn and gave Tschistokow an answer: “Everybody has to leave this place immediately, or we shoot!”
“Hurry up! In position! Take your guns! Dawaj!”, shouted Frank and waved the other guardsmen nearer. The Russians took their rifles from their shoulders and hastily formed a firing line.
“I knew that something like this would happen. Gomel is no tiny village...”, moaned Alf, staring at the police officer with the bullhorn.
Only a few hundred of the more than 20000 demonstrators were members of the militant section of Tschistokow`s organization. The biggest part of the crowd just consisted of ordinary citizens, and even women and children were among the people who had come the rally in Gomel.
The guardsmen in their gray shirts tried their to bring women, children and old people to the rear part of the mass.
“I ask you to give us only one hour. Then we will leave the city immediately!”, yelled Tschistokow again.
“You won`t get this hour from us, Mr. Tschistokow! This rally will end now - or we will shoot your people down!”, replied the officer.
“I`m sorry! But we will not go! I`ll deliver my speech and you will have to shoot me, that I keep my mouth shut! If you

won`t give us this one hour, many people will die today! On both sides! Please think about, if it`s really worth it!", threatened Tschistokow.
A long minute passed and an uncanny whispering and murmur went through the large crowd which slowly became anxious. All guardsmen of the freedom movement had now positioned themselves. Frank and Alfred were lying side by side on the asphalt.
The police officer ran back behind his men and finally gave the order to fire. Some of the officers hesitated for a short moment, but then they started to shoot and the first protesters fell to the ground, screaming and bleeding.
"Fire!", shouted Tschistokow into his megaphone after he had disappeared in the crowd.
A bloody firefight followed. Several dozens of police officers were shot down by the *Rus,* while hundreds of demonstrators were mowed down by the hail of bullets which came from behind the barriers. Immediately, even the anti-riot tanks joined the fight and returned fire with their gatling machine guns. Cries resounded from everywhere and full metal jackets cut through flesh and bones. Fountains of blood sprayed up in the crowd, while desperate outcries echoed in Frank`s ears and a tall man, whose chest had been ripped apart by a direct hit, fell on his back.
As a war-proven shooter, Kohlhaas killed two police officers with headshots and sent three more to the ground, then he rolled the dead men to the side and jumped up.
"Come on, Alf! We can`t win this fight!", he yelled, pulling Bäumer with him.
Meanwhile, the demonstrators were gripped by sheer terror and tried to escape through the side streets. Hundreds of dead and wounded people already covered the square. Finally, the tanks rolled forward and continued to fire at everyone in their way. It was a massacre.

”In that street there!”, roared Alf and Frank followed him.
Large swarms of people tried to break through a police barricade and the onrushing men and women ran directly into a deadly machine gun salvo. Then the first protesters attacked the policemen with iron bars, clubs or even bare fists. The armed guardsmen followed them and started to shoot, while all hell broke loose.
Driven by boundless terror, the people beated down some policemen who had blocked their way and finally jumped behind the barrier.
“You damn rats!”, screamed Frank and shot his entire magazine empty. Then he threw the rifle away and pulled a hatchet from his belt. With a loud roar, he smashed the head of the policeman in front of him, and tore his weapon out of the bloodspattered helmet of the man. Then he hacked down another cop and finally lost the hatchet which stuck deeply in the shoulder of the screaming opponent. Meanwhile, the outnumbered officers retired from the side street, and many of them were shot or beaten to death by the raging mob.
“They have tried to encircle us! Fuck!”, shouted Bäumer and picked up the pistol of a wounded policeman from the ground. He shot him in the chest and cursed.
The other people tried to escape through the now vacant street, dragging Frank and Alf with them. It was a giant chaos. The two men and a some Russians ran through an alley, strewn with garbage and rubble, and attacked anyone who got in their way.
“We must get a car somewhere!”, yelled Frank and turned into another street. Some demonstrators followed them. Finally, they reached an intersection, where a car was waiting in front of a stoplight.
Frank immediately ran across the street, shot the side window to pieces and shouted something in Russian at the

driver. A terrified man stared at him and did not dare to open his mouth.
“Get out of your car or I kill you!”, hissed Frank and pulled the scared driver out of his car. He started the vehicle and sped off with squealing tires.
“Shit! Shit! Shit!”, moaned Kohlhaas and raced like a madman through the streets.
“There! Highway! To Minsk!”, Alf pointed at a rusty sign.
Some minutes later, they had left the inner city. When they saw Gomel becoming smaller in the background, they sent a short prayer to heaven.
“My nerves are still raw! Bloody hell!”, gasped Bäumer, taking a deep breath.
“Those fucking cop bastards!”, growled Kohlhaas, slamming his fist against the windshield.
The two men drove past Minsk, refueled and finally arrived at Ivas a few hours later. They had survived a terrible day.

Stubborn

The Belarusian police had shot down more than 2500 demonstrators, and hundreds more arrested. About 400 police officers had also been killed or wounded in the bloody firefight and during the following riots, that had lasted till the morning hours of the next day. The media reported several days around the clock about the civil unrest and the street fights, mentioning the civilian casualties with no word. They accused Artur Tschistokow, that he had incited his followers to attack the police and turned around the facts in the usual way. The leader of the *Rus* was still shocked, because he had never expected a bloodbath like this. But his first rally in a bigger Belarusian city had finally ended in a disaster, and there was no more room to put a gloss on it.
Furthermore, the Scanchips of all persons, who had been identified as protesters, had meanwhile been blocked. It meant that all these people lost their jobs and became homeless in the long term. After a while, they were not even able to buy a sandwich anymore.
But these merciless terror measures had not the desired effect, because now still more people had nothing to lose anymore and looked up to Tschistokow like to a savior. Apart from that, more and more discontent spreaded among the Belarusian policemen, because of the fact that an increasing number of civil servants and officers got their salaries irregularly or had to accept wage cuts. Therefore, many policemen were no longer willing to risk their lives in bloody street fights or riots against Tschistokow`s supporters.
The leader of the *Rus* had meanwhile disappeared again, after he had escaped from Gomel, accompanied by a group

of heavily armed guardsmen. A little later, he tirelessly continued his struggle, driven by growing hatred and fanaticism. In his eyes, the massacre in the streets of Gomal had been another indication that the revolution would come in the near future.
Wilden and most of the other men from Ivas had escaped from the chaos, because they had decided to leave the city early enough. Nevertheless, two young men from the village had been killed by the police during the riots in the night.

Today, Artur Tschistokow had come to Minsk, where a few dozens of his lieutenants were waiting for him in a dingy restaurant in the south of the city. The demonstration in Gomel and its bloody consequences had paralyzed many of his followers, leaving them in a state of terror and insecurity. One or two had already asked Tschistokow, to refrain public meetings and rallies in the future, but the rebel leader was boiling inside and did not want to hear things like this. Now he demanded perseverance from his followers. Tschistokow walked to the end of the room, looked angrily around and started his speech...

“My dear comrades!
Bloody battles are lying behind us. Some of you have broken bones or have been shot. More than 2500 supporters of our freedom movement have soaked the streets of Gomel with their blood. The police has just shot us down, just slaughtered men, women and children - because they have claimed freedom!
But our eyes are still glowing with excitement, because we stand now closer together than ever before. The blood of the fallen soldiers is the glue, which sticks us together. We have finally realized, how determined our enemy is and now we have to show him, that we are still a hundred, a

thousand times more determined. We have to show them, that we will sacrifice without complaining. No guns, no tanks can stop us anymore. If we have to die for the survival of our nation, it is our duty. We do not want to ask, what`s good for us, because our lives are unimportant.
It is only important that our nation survives and our country will be freed from slavery! Like the old Rus, we want to be strong and don`t want to fear death. We will do the necessary things, endure all the pain with a smile, and even die the martyr`s death for the future of our children. If we have reached this state of inner freedom, then we can and will win the external freedom too!”

Tschistokow`s men were silent and just stared at him. The resentful speaker waved his forefinger and the burning gaze of his blue eyes touched the faces of his followers.

"If we march through the streets of another city, then our enemies will see, that they haven`t broken our spines. Then they will see our petrified glances and our steely will.
And we will scream at their faces: “Shoot! But don`t think that you can stop the revolution anymore! Although you tear bloody gaps into our ranks, we will come back, with even more comrades, again and again, and come back and bleed and bleed! Until your tyranny has fallen!
I have seen many of my faithful comrades in Gomel, dying in the streets, and I have held their hands until their eyes were cold and dead. You all have it too!
Now you must be strong, my brothers! Now, right now, you must be faithful, grim, hard, fearless, because now fate will prove us!
If we give up now and don`t save our people, then our nation will be extinct. Then, all fighting has been futile and pointless. If we give up today, then all freedom fighters

around the world can give up too, because they also have to risk their lives and have to suffer and die for the new morning!
If we fail, the world enemy will wipe out our nation in the next decades. Then all the sacrifices of our ancestors had been in vain. The nations of Western Europe are close to their total destruction and Russia is the only hope, our mother Europe still has in this dark age. If we fail, Europe with all its great nations will die a cruel and painful death. And if Europe dies, the rest of the world will become a bleak desert. Then, the light will leave this planet forever – and will never return!
So this is the most important war which has ever been fought in mankind`s history! Therefore, we have only to care about our fight, not about our little lives! We have no right to surrender in this battle, in front of our children and grandchildren and world history!"

Artur Tschistokow screamed it into the ears of his comrades, and he was shaken by anger and energy. Soon, his men felt moved as by an electric shock and the courage returned to their hearts again.
Only a few doubters remained among them, after the speaker had finished his preaching. The next demonstrations and rallies were already planned, despite the carnage of Gomel. And Tschistokow`s followers finally took heart. What had these outcast and neglected men to lose anymore?

While the situation in Belarus escalated, also other parts of the world were shaken by discontent. Frank and Alfred saw it on television on 24.03.2035: There had been a rebellion on the Philippines. The regime of sub-governor Oquino was overthrown by a successful insurrection. Rebel leader

Michael Arroyo took over the power, founded the former Philippine state again and finally allied with Matsumoto`s Japan. Overnight, another fire had broken out in the Far East. Four years ago, when Japan had fought its great struggle for liberation, there had been some first riots in many parts of the country. Now, the Philippine rebels, supported by Matsumoto, had actually managed it to break their chains and had conquered the city of Manila. Frank and the others were beside themselves with joy. A second revolution had been successful and another state had resisted the power of the World Government. Within a few hours, all eyes focused on the Philippines and the international media were boiling mad. The Lodge Brothers had another enemy.

“That`s a true sensation!”, shouted Wilden and jumped up and down in front of the TV.
Frank, Alfred and Sven clapped their hands. The latter tried it anyway, because three fingers were missing on his left hand since the Japanese war. Nevertheless, also Sven`s remaining eye lit up with confidence and hope.
“When can also do it!”, said Kohlhaas smiling and raised his fists.
”Now the Philippines! This is another kick in the butt of the World Government, ha, ha!”, cheered Alf.
“Matsumoto has his first official ally!”, returned the village boss and looked triumphantly at the screen, where a concerned reporter commented the pictures from Manila with a sardonic undertone. Thousands of people were demonstrating in front of the presidential palace, while Arroyo was delivering a speech.
“Let`s see, when the GCF will march in there!”, remarked Bäumer and stroke over his dark beard.

“They won`t attack the Phillipines. After all, the Japanese stand behind Michael Arroyo!”, answered Wilden.
“Do you think, that Artur has already heard the news?”, asked Sven the others.
Frank looked at him and nodded. “Well, I`m sure about that. It is on the news since hours...”
“It`s going on in Asia! And it is time that we give the Lodge Brothers another kick in their balls, in Europe!”, called Wilden.
Now the World President was interviewed and appeared visibly confused and worried. The four men in Ivas laughed, however, uttering spiteful remarks.
In the course of the day, Artur Tschistokow called them, completely beside himself with excitement.
These great news from a distant part of the world had significantly increased his morale and the Belarusian politician sounded more optimistic than ever, and told Wilden that he had planned a major offensive, full of publicity campaigns and protest marches for this year`s summer and autumn. It was only a matter of time for him until Belarus would fall into anarchy.
Apart from that, Tschistokow had just a lot of luck, because the powerful did not pay much attention to his movement, turning their views at more important regions of the world, and left the fight against his organization to the regional authorities and Medschenko.

Frank, Alfred and the rest of the other young men from Ivas returned to Belarus in the following week to support the Russians in their tireless publicity campaigns for the freedom movement. For several nights, they were even active in Minsk.
In early April, the *Rus* organized five concurrent demonstrations in small towns in the east of the country,

each with about 1000 people. They were successful and except for some minor clashes with the police, it all ended without bigger problems. Sometimes the officers simply looked away, leaving the demonstrators alone.
Today, Frank, Alfred, Artur and about hundred leaders of the guardsmen squads from all parts of Belarus had met on a large meadow, far out in the country. It came down in torrents, but Frank ignored the ugly weather.
“Frank and Alf, I will make you the leaders of my men with weapons. I have already told you!”, said Tschistokow.
“Thanks!”, answered Frank, feeling honored.
“Most of them can speak English. You can talk to them, no problem”, explained the Russian. “These men are the leaders of all my guardsmen units. I already told them, that in future you will give them the orders.”
Kohlhaas perked his eyebrows up. Then he grinned to himself. “Am I some kind of general now?”
“Yes, exactly! You are the general of the guardsmen! Right!”
“And Alf?”
Bäumer looked annoyed and felt ignored by Tschistokow. “What`s about me?”
The rebel leader mused for a minute, and finally he said: “Frank gives the orders to the northern units and Alf to the southern units, okay?”
Alf shook his head. “You can leave this honorable task to Frank. Shall he lead all these troopers. Meanwhile, I can watch his back...”
Kohlhaas laughed and winked at Bäumer. The blond Russian mused again.
“Well, Alf, as you will!”
“General Frank Kohlhaas!”, said Tschistokow while he clapped on Frank`s muscular arm.
“Your guardsmen need bulletproof vests, Artur!”, meant Frank now, pointing at the troopers behind him.

“Bulletproof vests?” Artur was baffled and looked for his German dictionary.
“I can explain it, I mean armor, helmets and so on”, said Kohlhaas with a grin.
“Ah, I see...”, Artur seemed to brood and scratched his head.
”In Gomel, our men hadn`t head any protection against bullets. But the cops had helmets and bulletproof vests.”
“You`re right!”, Tschistokow raised his hand and gazed pensively at the sky.
“Try to get this stuff, all kinds of armor, helmets...”, said Frank to Artur and let the guardsmen muster.
Then he told them that they had to equip themselves from now on. Each trooper should get a helmet and any kind of body protection till the next rally.
They spent the rest of the day with firing practices and Frank tried to teach the young Russians some basic military tactics. He loved his new role and enjoyed the respectful attention, he recieved from his new “soldiers”.

At the next demonstration in Luninyets, a bizarre sight was offered to the numerous inhabitants of the town who were witnessing the spectacle. About 300 troopers had come with their partly self-made armors. Some of them had strange looking vests of iron plates, others wore bulletproof vests which they had bought on the black market somewhere in Russia. Many guardsmen had some old helmets of the former Soviet army, the NVA and even the old German Wehrmacht!
Frank could not help grinning, but the main thing was that the helmets, which were partly already many decades old and often rusted, would protect the men.
“Better a weird looking helmet on the head, than a bullet in the head!”, said Kohlhaas to himself and grinned again.

And even the sparsely represented police reacted confusedly on this sight. Tschistokow delivered a fiery speech against the outsourcing of Belarusian factories and production complexes to low-wage countries and earned thunderous applause from the people, who were afraid of losing their jobs.
Otherwise, everything went smoothly and some police officers even greeted the 3000 demonstrators friendly. Artur seemed to be content. One day later, Frank and Alfred drove back to Ivas.
It was at the beginning of May. Meanwhile, Kohlhaas and Bäumer were “on vacation”, as they formulated it. They spent their time with hanging around in the living room or sitting in the kitchen, and took some long walks in the woods, enjoying the first warm sunrays of the year 2035.
“Have you seen Julia in the last days?”, asked Kohlhaas his friend.
They went deeper into the forest and finally sat down on a fallen tree. Alf shrugged: “She seems to be away. No, I haven`t seen her. Perhaps she is in Grodno, with Viktor.”
“Yes, could be...”, muttered Frank.
“I know, it annoys you...”
“Yes, could be...”, returned Kohlhaas sadly.
“Nevertheless, she likes you, Frank!”
“Pah! Of course! And why does she constantly visit that Russian?”, hissed Frank angrily.
“You have told me, that you have already...”
“Already what?”
“Well, you have...”
“Just forget about that!”
Alf looked at his friend in wonder. Then he said: “You have kissed her...and then?”
“Yes, something like that. Well, not exactly, I mean...”, stammered Frank.

“Don`t talk Chinese, Frank!”
“If she would be my girlfriend, she wouldn`t be in fucking Grodno, okay?”
Alf just grinned and asked for details. “Now, tell uncle Alf the whole, sad truth!”
“Fuck you, Alter!”, ranted Frank, giving Bäumer a slight nudge with his elbow.
“Let`s go!”, he suggested strongly and rose from his seat.
Alf could imagine that Frank had probably a bid exaggerated a few months ago. The reality of his “successful advance” towards the heart of Julia Wilden was apparently much more disillusioning than his euphoric “reports of victory”.
“Nevertheless, we have kissed. Even though, it has probably just been more amicable”, thought Frank and melancholically looked at the treetops, which slowly filled with fresh green leaves.
For a while, they walked through the beautiful forest that surrounded the village, and were silent. Perhaps the revolution which they all hoped for, was just an illusion, like Julia`s love. Frank should still find it out soon enough.

Meanwhile, Wilden dealt less with his daughter and more with strategic preparations of political campaigns. Today, he had risen early in the morning and was now sitting in front of his computer. The village boss designed a new flyer for the freedom movement, which was directed against the proposed “approximation of energy costs” in the sub-sector “Belarus-Baltic”.
This so called “alignment” meant nothing else but a massive increase of prices for natural gas and petroleum, which Medschneko`s government had announced for October. Wilden had seen a report about this newest raid of the regime last night on television. The prices for oil and gas

should be increased with not less than 60%, as the media told the people. Perhaps this was another turning point in the lives of millions of Belarusians and could finally become the last straw that would break the camel`s back.
While the country still had its own oil reserves, oil and gas were nevertheless imported from other regions now. Moreover, the population of Belarus had suffered under the constantly increasing prices for almost everything. This new “approximation” finally shook the people to the core and made them angrier than ever before. Apart from that, the steady reduction of the manufacturing industry and various tax hikes had driven countless Belarusians into a black hole of hopelessness and despair. Now the Medschenko regime tried to pull even more money out of their already empty pockets.
“Equalization of prices...”, whispered Wilden quietly to himself, staring angrily at the screen of his computer. “Those damn bandits!”
He went on to formulate the new leaflet and admired his meanwhile thorough knowledge of Russian. Then he looked thoughtfully out the window, typed around on the keyboard again and suddenly startled up. Somebody had knocked on the door.

Frank tried to hurry up. The house of the village boss was already behind the next street corner. Thorsten Wilden had rung him up this morning and had excitedly explained, that he had an important message for him. The young man rushed past a row of empty houses and finally turned left. Now he was almost there.
Some seconds later, he abruptly interrupted his run, gaped and gasped quietly. A police car was parking on the street and he could see the village boss, who asked three officers

in, in order to close the door behind them in the next moment. Frank scurried to the side and hid behind a wall.
“What the hell do these cops here?”, it flashed through his mind. His heart started to pound like crazy, then he sprinted back home.
“Alf, Alf! Damn, where are you?”, he yelled through the hallway.
Bäumer came down the stairs from the upper floor and slowly rubbed his eyes.
“What`s up?”
“The cops! There is a police car at Wilden!”, shouted Kohlhaas with a horrified expression.
“What?”, Alf was suddenly wide awake and almost fell backwards.
”The cops? What?”
”Yes, come with me and take your gun! Now!”
The two men ran down the street, reaching Wilden`s house after a few minutes. Moments later, they hid in the yard of an vacant house behind a shed and waited. The police car was still there.
“This can`t be true! There has never been a cop in Ivas! What does that mean?”, whispered Frank softly, peering past the shed.
“I don`t know...”, muttered Alf nervously. The two were silent, while Martin Brenner and his wife, Wilden`s neighbors, came out of their house and stared at the police car which was blocking their gateway. What had happened?

„The most of you are farmers?“, asked the policeman with the globular face.
Wilden had both hands in his pockets and tried to evade the views of the cops as good as he could.
„Yes, this is a village of farmers!”, he returned.

“But you are njemez? German?”, probed the other policeman.
„Yes...nemez...Tej hotschesch goworitch pa russkje?“, answered Wilden with a smile and hoped that his offer to talk Russian would bring him some sympathies.
„Njet!“, grunted the officer. „We talk in Englisch!“
Shortly afterwards, the policeman told the village boss that they had pursued some teenagers, who had sprayed an antigovernmental slogan on a wall – “Down with the World Government!”
The mummed young man had escaped into the woods near Ivas. It had been some nights ago, as the officer explained.
„Did you see any suspicious persons here in this village?“, he probed again now. Wilden tried to smile.
„No, I did not see three suspicious young men!“, answered Wilden angrily, playing the indignant man. “You have already asked me that…”
Suddenly one of the cops left the group and went into the kitchen, where Mrs. Wilden welcomed him with an anxious smile.
„You are okay?“, asked the man and grinned at her.
„Yes!“, breathed Agatha Wilden silently.
Then the officer walked around and seemed to watch out for something, while Wilden tried to start a harmless smalltalk with his colleagues. He spoke about the many interesting sides of farming, the lot of work in the village, seeding and harvesting and so on. Finally he told the policemen that Lithuania was a very beautiful country, full of nice people.
The two cops became a bit kindlier now and accepted Wilden`s offer to follow him into the kitchen to drink a warm tea. For some minutes, the village boss seemed to calm down.

„Oh, you have many books!“, it suddenly resounded out of the library in the next room and Wilden looked like he had been stabbed in the back.
He stood up immediately, smiled at the officers and hurried into the library, where a cop stupidly googled at the countless books around him. Obviously, he could not understand the German book titles at all. Meanwhile, Agatha Wilden gave the two officers another delicious blackberry tea – and just smiled and smiled.
„Ha, ha! Yes, my hobby is history. Just a hobby. I like to read everything about history”, said Wilden, stroking nervously through his gray hair.
“Are these books legal?”, enquired the officer with a harsh undertone.
„Yes, of course. The books are all for historical studies. For my little hobby. You know?”
“Nietzsche?”, the policeman stared at an old book and seemed to be overcallenged.
„Ha! Not very interesting. Just an old book!“, laughted the village boss calmingly.
The officer put the book back on the shelf. Then he left the room. Wilden took a deep breath and wiped off some drops of cold sweat from his brow.
„I don`t read at all. Reading is boring!”, grumbled the officer and finally went back into the kitchen.
After the policemen had enjoyed their tea, they left the house and shook Wilden`s hand with a friendly smile.
„If I see any suspicious persons here in this village, I will call you immediately!”, promised the village boss. The officers just nodded approvingly and the police car disappeared again.
The policemen had come to Wilden, because the authorities knew him as the registered owner of dozens of houses in Ivas. Meanwhile, all the villagers had become more than

upset, because this was the first time that a police car had come to the outlying and still abandoned looking village. This had changed today!
Fortunately, Wilden seemed not to had aroused the officer`s suspicions and had mimed the upright and harmless taxpayer once more.
Shortly afterwards, they knew who had made the silly spraying in the neighboring village of Rajazov. It had been three still very young teenagers, whose families had moved to Ivas with Wilden`s permission one year ago.
Frank, Alfred and Sven finally beat them up, while the village boss threatened their parents to banish them, if something like this would ever happen again. But after a while, all calmed down – even Frank and Alf, who had reacted on the incident with a tantrum.

“What?”, hissend Frank, opened the front door and looked at three hardly 16 to 18 year old guys, whose heads were bandaged. Two of them had black eyes and a few scratches on their faces.
“What?”, he yelled at them again. Now even Alf came to the door.
“We just wanted to apologize, Mr. Kohlhaas...and...uh...Mr. Bäumer”, said one of the teenagers quietly.
“Yes, all right! Accepted! The main thing is that you have understood, that such stupid shit can lead to a great disaster. Why have you done it that close to our home village?”, huffed Frank menacingly, standing in front of the frightened boys.
A 17 year old boy named Ingo Moser nodded and stammered: “Yes, we are sorry. We will never do it again!”
“This is healthier! Believe me!”, hissed Bäumer and his eyes twinkled angrily. Meanwhile, Frank almost felt a bit sorry for

the beaten up boys. They had come to the doorstep like some shy little dogs, and hardly dared to cough.
“Okay, we are sorry too. We didn`t want to beat you up that heavily, but you have just deserved it. This stupid action has endangered the whole village”, said Frank, cooling off slowly.
“What do you think, the cops will do with us if they ever find out who we are?”, added Alf.
“We just wanted to help the freedom movement. Sven always says...”, stuttered a fat little boy with red hair and freckles sheepishly.
“I`m gonna talk to him. Maybe Sven will allow you to join his group, but you will follow his orders, okay? And here, in the proximity of our village, you will not spray or make any propaganda at all, otherwise I will eat you alive!”, grumbled Kohlhaas and perked his dark eyebrows up.
“Yes...I mean...no...of course not, Mr. Kohlhaas”, wailed the chubby redhead.
“Tell your parents, that we are sorry for the black eyes and stuff. But this lesson is better than everything that awaits us, if the cops or even the GSA will ever show up here”, explained Frank and dismissed the teenagers.
“Thank you, Mr. Kohlhaas and Mr. Bäumer”, he could finally hear. Then the three boys walked off.

A few days later, Frank had arranged that the three teenagers could join Sven`s group. When he went shopping in Steffen de Vries` little store and met the mother of the redhead, the woman only greeted him with a silent “Hello!”. Kohlhaas did not care, if she was still offended, because the boys had deserved the beating, as he meant.
In the following days, the village boss ordered increased security measures. HOK checked all the Scanchips of the villagers again and spent endless hours in front of his

computer. He even revised the registrations of vehicles and planes once more.
Meanwhile, Julia had returned to Ivas. This time, Viktor was not with her. Frank just nodded silently, when he saw her in the village or in Wilden`s house. The young woman had immediately noticed that he was still angry about her and sometimes she tried to start a smalltalk with him, but Kohlhaas openly ignored her and was not willing to change his behaviour.
Furthermore, Artur Tschistokow had planned another rally at the end of the month. This time he had chosen Lyepyel. The situation in the country had become even worse in the meantime. The economic and social decline had taken an alarming course, and now there were spontaneous outbursts of anger and indignation in many parts of Belarus.
In Pinsk, workers of a production complex had started a strike to enforce higher wages. In other cities it was the same. The police had always to intervene, and the strikes ended with several dead and wounded people.
Medschenko`s regime was under increasing pressure, while Tschistokow`s movement got a massive inflow of new members.
After a football match in Minsk, there were heavy conflicts between young Belarusians and immigrants from Georgia and Kazakhstan, who lived in the north of the city. The rival groups attacked each other with baseball bats and knives and many people ended in hospitals. Two Belarusians and one Kazak were killed. In the following days some Belarusian youths threw a self-made bomb at a group of foreigners and the riots escalated, while the local police tried to quell them with sheer brutality. But the feuds between Russians and immigrants still continued, and four Kazaks were finally shot by an unknown man in front of a pub. Meanwhile, some parts of Minsk resembled a powder

keg and the situation in the country stood close to a giant explosion. However, this was the condition Artur Tschistokow was waiting for.

Mood of Crisis

“Are you ready to die?“, yelled Frank and waved a squad leader nearer. The man grinned cynically, while Kohlhaas gave him some instructions in broken Russian. Shortly afterwards, the armed guardsmen flanked the demonstration at a distance of five meters.
Meanwhile, most of the Russians seemed to respect him. After all, they had not forgotten that he had saved Tschistokow`s life. A huge crowd of people had gathered today in the eastern part of Grodno, near a abandoned shopping street. Frank looked around and saw vacant shops and rubbish on the street in front of him. This city was slowly dying, like the rest of Belarus too.
Hundreds of unemployed and homeless people came from everywhere, welcoming the *Rus* with loud screams and cheer. Artur had allowed some of them to join today`s rally, if they behaved properly. But a few of them were already much too drunk and the guardsmen had to send them back home, because Tschistokow did not accept any boozy squallers. Finally, over 20000 people had come to Grodno today, including many citizens from Gomel. Obviously, the massacre had not broken their will, to the contrary, now they had nothing to lose anymore and viewed Tschistokow as their last hope. Frank was curious, what was awaiting him today.
Julia had not come with him. And for good reasons. If there would be bloody street fights like in Gomel, it was better for a young woman to stay in. However, her heartthrob Viktor was here somewhere. The handsome, charming Russian had led the group of Grodno over a longer period, but a few months ago, he had stepped back into the second rank and

had left the leadership to another man. Perhaps this change of heart had something to do with Julia, as Frank thought. He still mused about this since the early morning hours, searching the crowd for his hated rival.
Around noon, the protest march began. Hundreds of dragon head and Russia flags waved above the heads of the demonstrators. Half a kilometer away from their meeting place, the police and even GCF soldiers were waiting for the *Rus*. So far, they just observed everything.

At the top of the long human worm, Artur Tschistokow walked beside some bodyguards with assault rifles in their hands. The Russian stared at the policemen with a black look and waited. Frank and Alfred finally came from behind, while Wilden stayed in the rear of the crowd. Meanwhile, the two German guardsmen had mummed.
“It was better to watch these cops, who had come to Ivas, from the distance. At first, I wanted to go to Thorsten to ask him what they wanted, but this would have been the wrong decision”, said Frank.
“Maybe they already know our faces. I`m still worrying about that whole thing”, returned Alf.
Although the two men from Ivas had once more hidden their faces behind broad sunglasses and black scarfs, they had been a bit too careless at some other rallies in the last months. Any camera had already recorded their faces for sure, meant Bäumer.
Today, both men wore old steel helmets which John Thorphy had bought for them somewhere in Russia. The helmets were some remainders of the former “peace troops” of the UN, that had finally become the “Global Control Force” after 2018. In addition, they wore bulletproof vests.
“Look at this!”, said Frank with a grin, pointing at a hulking Russian trooper in front of him.

“This looks more than weird...”, muttered Alf, because of the strange sight.
The Russian had a battered fireman`s helmet on his head and a steel plate, attached on his chest. He looked like one of the rebellious peasants from the Middle Ages, who went to war with a hastily clobbed together armor to fight their evil landlord.
“I don`t think that this will proctect him from any bullets!”, joked Frank and Alf giggled.
“Nevertheless, it shows some goodwill!”, laughed Bäumer.
“Give all power – to Tschistokow! Down with Medschenko!”, resounded a loud chorus out of thousands of throats through the streets. The crowd marched across a large square, surrounded by beautiful old buildings, and moved then towards a long main street.
On the sidewalks, many citizens applauded and yelled. Meanwhile, the most Belarusians seemed to like the freedom movement. Only a bunch of non-Russians was screaming some insults in the background. However, this large crowd was an inspiring and impressive sight, without any doubt. The *Rus* finally reached another square in the middle of the city, right in front of the town hall of Grodno, the residence of the local administrator. Tschistokow started his speech and greeted his supporters and the countless citizens. Meanwhile, the police had gathered around the crowd, but was still outnumbered many times over. Shortly afterwards, even some anti-riot tanks appeared.

“If you believe, that we are already many people, then just wait and see, how many we will soon be in Minsk, when the people of Belarus will finally rise against their oppressors!”, shouted the blond man into the microphone.
Thousands cheered. Frank could see that even some policemen smiled pleasantly. Artur continued in his usual

manner, accusing the World Government and Medschenko to promote the decline of folk and country. His voice resounded across the square and he electrified the mass around him once again.
“There! Look!”, Frank pointed at the old town hall, where a man looked out a window on the upper floor.
“Look at him, my Belarusian brothers and sisters! Can you see him? That man at the window of this beautiful town hall? We all know this man! It is Jaron Kaminer, the administrator of this city, a minion in the service of the World Government! Yes, take a good, long look, Mr. Kaminer! Soon, we will send people like you packing!”, yelled Tschistokow.
The man disappeared behind the curtain and the angry crowd sent him a wave of insults and curses. Some troopers even pointed their guns at the window and shouted threats, but Frank called them to order.
“To the policemen, I have the following request: I promise by my honor that there will be no violence today, if you just let me speak!”, proclaimed the rebel leader.
The officers did not react and remained as silent as before. Some of them nodded until their superior yelled at them angrily. Apparently, also the policemen seemed not to be interested in another shootout. The police chief finally took a bullhorn and interrupted Tschistokow. The crowd seethed.
“The next street fight starts in two minutes!”, moaned Kohlhaas and took his gun from the shoulder.
The GCF soldiers, who all were no Russians, positioned themselves alongside the police and loaded their weapons. Frank gave some orders to the guardsmen who were also waiting for another firefight.
“This demonstration is illegal and all people have to leave this square immediately!”, ordered the police chief.

“Let me speak for twenty minutes, then I will end this demonstration!”, answered Tschistokow.
“I have the orders to shoot at you, if you don`t stop this rally, Mr. Tschistokow!”, shouted the officer. “I don`t want a second Gomel. Even my men have families!”
“Well, I would like to speak for ten minutes, then we will leave this city – no riots, no violence. I promise it!
I also want no second Gomel and I regret it very much that we had to fight against our Belarusian brothers from the police. Don`t waste your lives for politicians, who are nothing but traitors, leading this country into chaos. They don`t care about your lives, you are their slaves, like everyone else. Do you really want to die for 500 Globes a month?”, called the rebel leader.
“Please wait, Mr. Tschistokow!”, replied the squad leader and consulted some of his colleagues.
Artur exhorted his followers to remain calm and peaceful, while Frank, Alfred and Peter Ulljewski rebuked some aggressive, young Russians.
It lasted ten tense minutes until the police chief took his bullhorn again and answered: “All right, Mr. Tschistokow! I give you ten minutes!”
“Thank you!”, returned the leader of the *Rus* happily.
While Tschistokow ended his speech in time, within ten minutes, and finally gave the order for an orderly retreat towards the eastern part of Grodno, chaos broke out on the opposite side.
The police chief of Grodno and the leading officer of the GCF occupation troops started to argue loudly and Frank heard the men insulting each other in broken English. Shortly afterwards, the Belarusian policemen just walked off the square, leaving the GCF soldiers alone. However, this was an outrageous scandal, and its ramifications should become clear in the following weeks. The march ended

peacefully. Only some young Russian hotspurs had tried to start a brawl, but the guardsmen had immediately restored discipline.
“This is no adventure holiday for knuckleheads who want to make trouble. Those who can`t behave, have to leave this demonstration. I have promised the police, that this day will end without another fight and you should thank me for this!”, explained Tschistokow his supporters again and again on the way home.

“It has simply been an unbelievable success, hasn`t it?”, said Wilden.
The men, who were walking on this sunny day beside him across the village square of Ivas, agreed. However, only a few of them did really understand the full meaning of the incident in Grodno. But as always, the head of the village community lectured and tried describe the whole political situation, omitting no detail.
“Instead of a bloody streetfight, the Belarusian police has cooperated with us”, avered Frank.
“Now you exaggerate! Cooperated? Well, they just haven`t been in the mood for murder and manslaughter again - as little as we!”, answered Alf.
“Anyway, some of the cops have shown sympathies for us”, remarked Sven.
Kohlhaas looked at Wilden. “The system has avoided a confrontation, and finally lost a big part of its authority. The Belarusian policemen have violated their orders to safe their lives, in an important city like Grodno. This is, without any doubt, a huge success and shows that the freedom movement is meanwhile a political factor!”
“Frank is right! I have already discussed it with Artur. We will conquer the rural areas now, develop improved structures and recruit more guardsmen units in every village and every

smaller town. They are no longer able to stop us!", said the village boss.
"What is the sense of this?", asked one of the young activists.
"The sense? Well, the great day! When the government in Minsk bites the dust", Frank told him emphatically.
The group sat in Steffen de Vries` cafe which was almost overcrowded with so many guests. The thick Belgian hastily came to their table and took some orders.
"Today, we are cafe house revolutionaries!", joked Wilden.
Some of the others looked at him with questioning glances and the village boss laughed and said:
"All right, folks! I`m just kidding!"
Then he rubbed his hands, grinned and drank a delicious milkshake – Steffen de Vries` speciality.

The media in the administration sector "Eastern Europe" almost hushed up the big demonstration in Grodno. In some news reports the protest march was only mentioned with a few words. On television, they spoke of "several hundred anarchists and extremists" and simply ignored all other facts. Meanwhile, heads started to roll at the Grodno police department. The squad leader and his entire staff were removed for disobeying an direct order from the government and the Scanchips of some policemen were blocked for an indefinite time. Now, many of the despaired officers openly complained about the situation in Belarus, what meant even more drastic measures against them.
The GSA, which had paid little attention to Belarus so far, sent now a small special unit to Minsk that should analyze and monitor the behavior of the local police. But all in all, the Lodge Brothers did not expect a serious uprise in the small Eastern European country with its population of hardly a dozen millions. No further GCF units were sent to Belarus,

because they were needed much more urgent elsewhere. The GSA was more concerned about Russia and the Ukraine, where poverty and discontent were spreading like a plague, and also could become explosive one day.
While rebellious underground groups played no significant roles in Russia and were furthermore hopelessly fragmented, Artur Tschistokow had formed a powerful movement under his leadership. Nevertheless, the GSA did not take him all too serious – and this was his great luck!

It was a warm evening and a mild wisp of wind blew across the meadow in front of Sven Weber`s house. Frank and Alfred had returned to Ivas a few days ago, after they had met with Tschistokow and other members of his organization in Slonim.
While the Russian politician let no day pass without expanding his freedom movement, laying the groundwork for a rebellion of the masses, led by him, Frank and Alfred had decided to enjoy some free days in their home village. This evening, they had gone to Sven and were sitting with him and his parents in the garden, drinking a cold Lithuanian beer.
“Artur is planning a nationwide strike in Belarus and Lithuania in the middle of October. If his plan is successful, we`ll have good chances”, said Frank.
Sven`s remaining eye looked at him annoyedly and his disfigured face betrayed that he did not want to talk about politics today.
“What`s up?”, asked Kohlhaas.
“Let`s choose another topic!”, suggested Alf.
Frank put him off. “Okay!”
“Yes, may Tschistokow do whatever he likes. Another cool blonde*?”, said Sven, reaching into a small cold box on the ground.

With a faint clicking sound, he pulled a beer out of it. Alf`s eyes gleamed. “Good idea, bring it on!”
“Cool blonde? Cool blondie! This rather reminds me of Julia Wilden!”, muttered Frank. Mrs. Weber grinned and winked at him.
“Here we go again! Now, it`s Julia time!”, moaned Bäumer, rolling his eyes.
“Alf also needs a woman, what do you think guys?”, asked Frank into the round and clapped his tall friend on the shoulders.
“You should find a girl at first, buddy! And if you still have another woman left, you can give her to me”, replied Alf.
“Mr. Bäumer!”, said Mrs. Weber with a chuckle.
“Leave me alone with that women thing!”, hissed Sven.
At this moment, he became aware of the fact that every woman would try to run away, when she saw him. The Japanese war had reversed the former undoubtedly attractive face of the young man with a maimed grimace.
“My little boy, you`ll also find a nice woman one day. Every Jack has his Jill!”, remarked Mrs. Weber and patted her son.
”I know what you mean. My Jill would look like Frankenstein`s bride”, answered the young man with a cynic smile.
Sven`s father avoided any comments and his son seemed to be happy about it. Frank tried to turn the conversation to another topic.
“Have you seen these young boys again, who have done that spraying in our neighboring village?”
“They have been with us in Grodno”, said Sven. “They are all right now, and very active. Really good boys!”
“Right, we must care for our young activists!”, remarked Baumer and grabbed the next bottle of beer.
“But they`re still a bit scared of you”, answered Sven.

“Damn, we were really pissed off on that day, because of the cops and...”, muttered Kohlhaas.
“Anyhow, they have deserved some punishment! I have already talked turkey with them. Meanwhile, I can`t say any bad things about them anymore, to the contrary, they are good acitvists now.”
It was getting dark. Sven brought some candles out of the house and put them on the plastic table in their midst, his parents had already gone to bed. Suddenly they heard steps. The outlines of a slender person, coming nearer, could be seen from afar. It was Julia Wilden.

“Ah, here you are! I`ve been looking for you everywhere. What are you doing?”, asked Wilden`s daughter and smiled.
“Can`t you see it? We`re boozing!”, said Frank gruffly and emptied his bottle with a single sip.
“What`s up?”, Sven wanted to know then.
“Nothing! I just tried to say hello!”, replied Julia.
Frank distorted his mouth and looked at the pretty blonde.
“You have been a rare guest in the last time...”
“I know, but today I just wanted to stop by.”
Bäumer shrugged his shoulders, while Kohlhaas smiled sardonically.
“Your father has told me, that you have once again been in Grodno. With Viktor, the great rebel!”
“Thus, I`m back now…”, she answered quietly.
“Do you want to drink a beer?”, asked Sven and beckoned with a chilled bottle.
“No, thank you! I sit down, okay?”
“But it is nice that you delight us with your presence, madam!”, quipped Frank, grinning ironically.
Julia was silent and looked down at the plastic table. Kohlhaas was irritated. “What`s about your pretty Viktor? Is he still active in the movement? Now, tell something!”

“I don`t know…”, she whispered afflictedly.
“You don`t know, Julia? Is your Viktor still a member of the movement – yes or no? Or does has he meanwhile started a career as a male model?”, sneered Kohlhaas.
“I do not know. He in the Grodno and I`m here”, she said quietly.
“We already know that, Julia. Anyway, we can only see you, while Viktor seems not to be here. What has happened to Mr. Pretty?”, teased Frank and grinned at her contemptuously. Sven was confused.
“All right, then I`ll go now”, said Julia, stood up and walked away.
Frank drank another beer and seemed to be somehow irritated. Eventually, he went home and fell asleep immediately. Julia no longer interested him. At least, he tried to believe this.

Artur Tschistokow sent some of his best men to Russia and the Ukraine to get in touch with other underground groups of dissidents to form an alliance. Peter Ulljewski traveled to Moscow and met some members of the “New Flag”, a growing underground group of patriotic Russians who wanted to have their old country back, and had been quite active during the last months. Other proponents of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* went to St. Petersburg, Kiev, Volgograd, Novgorod, Ryazan, Rostov, Tula and about two dozen other cities. Here they met other rebels of various kinds. In the most cases, the talks were successful and an initial cooperation could be organized. Tschistokow had meanwhile realized, that Belarus would be nothing but a base for a far greater revolution in Russia and in the Ukraine in the long term, if they would ever make it to take over the power in Minsk. Therefore, it was necessary to find more allies beyond the borders of Belarus.

The hotbed, made of poverty, fear and ethnic tensions, was very fruitful in Russia. However, it lacked the numerous small groups of organization and leadership. None of the other rebel groups in Russia had achieved a political or even military power so far.
Often it were only small, insignificant bunches of malcontents. Nevertheless, the TV reports about Artur Tschistokow and his freedom movement had also impressed the political dissidents in Russia and the Ukraine. They admired the young politician and rated it as a great honor, if one of his representatives visited them.
Wilden had also a high goal. He resumed contact with his old friend Masaru Taishi from Tokyo and asked him to organize a meeting with a member of the Japanese government. The village boss hoped that Matsumoto`s state would financially support them.
Finally, Mr. Taishi managed it to arrange a meeting. The old Japanese businessman became not tired to emphasize, that his friend from Lithuania had sent the Japanese army two “heroes of Okinawa”. Foreign minister Mori himself eventually gave Wilden the chance for a short talk. A few days later, the village boss flew to Japan.

Frank was meanwhile sure that Julia and Viktor were no longer together.
“He has just exploited me!”, complained the beautiful woman and tried to find solace at Frank. But Kohlhaas gave her the cold shoulder and pretended to have no time for “women`s stuff” - after all, the revolution was calling for him. Nevertheless, the fact that his secret love seemed to be interested in him again was inspiring. In the following weeks, the freedom movement made two more rallies in smaller towns and enjoyed popularity among the locals. The few policemen, who watched the demonstration, behaved

passively or even cooperatively, avoiding any confrontations. Artur Tschistokow finally managed it to meet the chief of the local police for a brief talk after the demonstration.

Meanwhile, Thorsten Wilden was in Japan since two days. Frank racked his brain about what he would achieve by talking with the Japanese foreign minister. His friend Alf was curious too. However, both had the greatest ideas and sometimes literally fell into daydreams.
But the former businessman from Westphalia should not disappoint them. He proved himself, in the conversation with Akira Mori, the closest friend of president Matsumoto, as a brilliant diplomat and negotiator. He managed to convince the foreign minister of Japan that the freedom movement actually had a realistic chance to take over the power in Belarus.
Apart from that, Japan urgently needed more allies and partners who supported them in their fight against the World Government. After the Philippines had won their independence, under Japanese protection, and the GCF initially risked no further war in the Far East, it sounded more than tempting for Mori, that there could really be a successful revolution in an European country. The foreign minister of Japan promised Wilden some bigger deliveries of arms and moreover financial support.
Finally Tschistokow got a donation of not less than fifty million yen from the Japanese state. The situation changed apruptly. Inspired by his success, Wilden returned to Belarus and told Tschistokow the great news. The rebel leader could hardly believe what he heard and was beside himself with joy. Now the political success had to follow.

It was pleasantly warm in this beautiful summer night. Frank, Alfred, Sven and about thirty Russians had made their way to Klaipeda and were waiting for a merchant ship. They tiredly lurked in the darkness, behind a huge wall of metal containers at the port.
“What`s the time?”, asked Sven.
Frank held his watch under the light of a dim street lamp.
“Quarter past two!”, he muttered.
“I hope that they really come!”, grumbled Alf and lit a cigarette.
“The Japs have said between two and three o`clock!”, answered Kohlhaas and yawned.
One of the Russians bugged him shortly thereafter with the same question, in barely understandable English. Frank reacted angrily and chased him away.
After half an hour, a rusty merchant ship appeared at the docks. “Brazil” could be read on the bow of the inconspicuous transport ship.
“It must be them!”, whispered Frank and waved the others nearer.
Shortly afterwards, the ship docked at the port and the rebels crept forward. Nobody could be seen anywhere, because the loading port of Klaipeda was a lonely place in the middle of the night.
“Konban wa!”, shouted a man out of a hatch of the ship and opened a large access door.
“Hello!”, said Frank, and went with the rest of the rebels on board.
They shook the hands of the Asians and went below. Here was a huge room full of banana crates, about a hundred or even more, as Frank guessed.
“Watashi wa captain desu!”, said a smiling Japanese.
“He is the captain of that rusty ship”, translated Frank with a grin.

The Japanese opened one of the boxes. “Look! Very good guns from the army of Japan!”
“Where are the bazookas?”, asked Kohlhaas.
The man opened another box and Frank took a look at some modern anti-tank weapons. He clapped the Japanese on the shoulder.
Then he nodded and they lost no more time. Frank and the others brought the banana crates to some trucks and disappeared as fast as they could. The Japanese had kept their promise and further deliveries of arms from the Far East followed.
The weapons were hidden at various secret places in northern Belarus. It was a whole arsenal: assault rifles of all types, hand guns, bazookas and even portable rocket launchers with automated target acquisitions to fight Skydragons or bombers. The men of the freedom movement were quite amazed. It was a blessing, that the Japanese foreign minister had not denied their wishes, and apparently believed in the success of their struggle.

*”Cool blonde” = “kühles Blondes” (German slang term for a bottle of beer)

Medschenko under Pressure

“What was the name of that dump again?”, shouted Frank from the back seat.
“Legatzk! I have already said it many times!”, answered John Throphy annoyedly.
“How far is it?”, asked Wilden
“Maybe three miles!”, muttered the Irishman and accelerated the car.
“Why hasn`t Artur invited me to the meeting? I will ask him that!”, murmured Bäumer with a questioning glance.
“I don`t know. He will probably have a reason”, meant the village boss and fumbled on the collar of his trench coat.
The car jolted over an old cobbled street and turned left. Finally they reached a rundown village. Except for an old woman who was slowly hobbling across the muddy road in front of them, they did not see anybody. After about three hundred meters, the car stopped and a man in a gray shirt waved at them from a side street. They had reached their goal.
Wilden got out first and looked around. Dilapidated houses, some vacant, were on both sides. The men from Ivas followed the Russian.
“Come in!”, said the guardsman, greeting briefly and leading them into a house.
Everything here seemed to crumble and the building looked more like a ruin. Then they went up some stairs and finally entered a large room. About twenty men were waiting here, and Artur Tschistokow hurried to meet them.
“I greet you, my friends!”, he said with a smile and shook their hands.

The men in front of them sat at a long wooden table and Artur made some remarks in Russian. Frank could not understand everything, because the blond man talked rapidly and indistinctly. Shortly afterwards, he came back to his German friends and the Irishman.
“We are talking today about the new government of Belarus, after the revolution”, he said gravely.
“A new government?”, asked Kohlhaas with surprise.
“Yes, if we make revolution and it works, then we need a new government in this country!”
“Aha?”, Wilden wondered.
“Is this the reason for the meeting?”, asked Bäumer dizzyingly.
“Yes, right!”, answered the Russian rebel. “I want Mr. Wilden and Frank in my government, okay?”
“Well, I understand…”, returned Alf easily offended and took a glass of mineral water.
Artur Tschistokow told his Russian colleagues again, what Wilden had achieved for the freedom movement with his journey to Japan. The village boss earned admiring glances, while some of the men applauded.
They knew Frank as well. He had saved Artur`s life and was meanwhile the commander of the most important trooper squads of the organization.
The leader of the Rus looked at Wilden and said: “I want you to be the “minister of foreign things” of Belarus in my government!”
“Foreign minister – we say in German”, explained Frank.
“Yes, the foreign minister of Belarus”, stressed Tschistokow.
The village boss smiled and thanked the Russian for the honorable offer.
“Frank, you will be the commander of the army of Belarus. Do you agree?”

Kohlhaas was initially confused and paused. He briefly looked around and nodded then thoughtfully.
“All right!”, he returned and smiled at Artur.
“Well, I`m happy. You are good fighters”, said the Russian and seemed to be pleased.
“And these are the other members of your cabinet?”, asked Wilden, looking at the men at the table.
“Right! This is Dr. Gugin. Previously he has been at the university in Minsk. He was a lecturer. Dr. Gugin is minister of economy!”
An elderly man with a shrunken face, a bald head and bright gray eyes, rose from his seat and shook their hands.
“Peter Ulljewski is the commander of the new secret service”, explained Artur, pointing at his oldest friend. Frank gave the sturdy street fighter a wink and grinned.
“A good idea!”, meant the village boss.
“Mr. Juri Litschenko from Vitebsk, he will be minister for the interior. Mr. Gregori Lossov will be the minister of defense…”
Two middle-aged men stood up and bowed. Now Tschistokow introduced also the rest of the men to his German friends. They all should play a major role in the new, revolutionary Belarus, as the leader of the *Rus* planned.
“Well, congratulations!”, Frank heard from the side. It was Alf.
Bäumer seemed to feel like a fifth wheel in this illustrious round of revolutionaries and Frank felt visibly uncomfortable. Nevertheless, he was proud that Tschistokow had made an offer like this to him.
”If there will ever be a revolution, then I`ll give you an important position”, Kohlhaas appeased his best friend.
“Yes, yes, do what you want, great master!”, grumbled Bäumer and turned round.

“Shall I ask Artur?”
Alf interrupted Frank rudely: “No! Forget it!”
After an hour they left the Russians and drove back to Ivas. Frank was thinking about the future, while Alf stared out the window, and Wilden lectured about his first measures as “theoretical foreign minister” of the new Belarus.
Kohlhaas could feel the boundless enthusiasm of the village boss, because of Artur Tschistokow`s plans. But he still was sceptical concerning all these revolutionary dreams. Maybe it would be nothing but a figment in the end.

The rebels spent the sunny July of 2035 with ceaseless agitation. Artur Tschistokow made three smaller demonstrations in the west of the country. It came to no significant conflicts with the local police and Frank grew more and more in the role of the guardsmen`s leader.
Meanwhile, tens of thousands of pamphlets and newspapers flooded the land, and virtually the entire village youth of Ivas and thousands of Russians were active in Belarus and Lithuania day and night. Tschistkjow had preached his men that the revolution still had to come in this year.
A growing number of people had now open sympathies for the *Rus*, while the state authority was crumbling more and more in many regions of the country. Often, the cops just looked away, left the streets to Tschistokow`s men and let them distribute their propaganda material. This was already a huge success.
At the same time, the situation in Belarus deteriorated further. In August, the food prices climbed upward again and there were strikes and riots in the bigger cities. Furthermore, the feared increase of the prices for oil and gas was still coming. It was planned for October. During the cold winter months, this hated new measure could finally

cause a revolutionary mood. However, Artur Tschistokow and Wilden believed this, and the rapid growth of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* seemed to prove them right. Once, this organization had been nothing but a small group of discontent people, but now thousands of Belarusians poured towards the dragon head banners. In August, the *Rus* finally planned to return to Gomel.

It was a beautiful autumn day. The bright rays of the sun warmed the city of Gomel, that Belarusian city which had seen a bloody massacre, no *Rus* would ever forget. Frank, Alf and Artur could not believe their eyes. They stood in the midst of a giant sea of people. The rebel leader told them, that today almost twice as many people as at the last demonstration had gathered in the city center.
“This is incredible. What a crowd! I think between 30000 and 40000 people”, marveled Frank.
“The necessity is driving them to us”, said Wilden soberly, eyeing the crowd.
“If they don`t shoot us down again today, the Medschenko regime will lose its face!”, meant Kohlhaas and stared at some belligerent policemen in the distance.
“Come on!”, said Alf and pulled his friend on the sleeve of his gray shirt.
Then they went to the Russian guardsmen. Frank gave them some orders and the men walked off.
He turned to Bäumer and remarked: “Today we have more than 3000 armed troopers here. This time, the cops will get some really bloody feedback if they attack us again. A few hundred guardsmen are waiting in the side streets, in smaller groups. Now we can encircle them too. But I hope it won`t end in another bloodbath.”

“Good idea! I hope the same. Meanwhile, both sides have become more cautious and I can`t imagine that the cops will risk another shootout”, speculated Alf.
Shortly afterwards, the mass started to move and headed towards the town hall of the city. Defiant chants resounded through the crowded streets and hundreds of flags and banners were waved.
Today they were more than just a mass of discontented demonstrators. This was a small army that could meanwhile withstand the police forces. All the officers who were stationed in the east of Belarus, had been sent to Gomel by the Medschenko regime today, what showed the importance of this second rally.
The protesters marched about five miles through downtown and finally reached a large square. Here was the town hall. Artur Tschistokow delivered a speech which lasted almost two hours and shouted out his usual accusations against the government in Minsk, while he promised the people of Belarus a bright future under his leadership in return. The policemen behaved restrainedly.
“They do nothing. Despite their anti-riot tanks and the whole stuff!” Frank was surprised and pushed up his steel helmet.
“Maybe this all will end in peace today. The cops will also think twice before they start to shoot at us again”, said Alf.
After a while, a police officer came towards them and made his way through the crowd, while many demonstrators yelled insults at him. Nevertheless, the man walked straight to Artur Tschistokow and started to talk with him.
“What's happening?”, asked Kohlhaas and looked in the direction of Alf. Bäumer came to him.
They pushed some men to the side and could finally see something. The two rebels from Ivas paused and did not trust their eyes anymore. The policeman shook Artur Tschistokow`s hand, smiled and went back to his men.

Then the leader of the *Rus* shouted something into his megaphone.
“What has he said?”, asked Alf.
“Artur has given the command to march off. The demonstration is over!”, translated Frank.
“What do you mean?”
“We`re going home! Closing time for today!”
“Huh?”, Alf was puzzled.
“No shooting, no killing, just going home, Bäumer!”
The huge crowd peacefully left the inner city with amazing discipline. Some police units followed them and almost looked like companions this time.
Eventually, the crowd dissolved and the protesters went home. Except for some quarrelsome young people, who started some brawls on the way home, everything went smoothly. Finally Artur Tschistokow departed with a satisfied smile at the end of the day. The second protest march through Gomel had been a triumph.

“Why haven`t the GCF soldiers done anything?”, wondered Bäumer and fetched something to drink.
“Simply because they have been far too few. The Belarusian police has denied to support them anymore. Alone, they wouldn`t have had a chance against 3000 armed guardsmen”, said Wilden.
“On television they have almost hushed up the rally in Gomel”, replied Frank and sat on the old office chair in Wilden`s study like a king.
“About what shall they report this time? About the fact, that they can`t stop us anymore? That they have already lost a part of their power? Ha, ha!”, laughed the village boss, slapped his thighs.
“You`re right!”, remarked Kohlhaas.

The former entrepreneur stood up in front of Frank and Alfred. “This has been our greatest victory ever! The system has capitulated in Gomel. Do you really understand this?”
“Well, I guess you`re right, Thorsten”, answered Alf. “Maybe they have really drawn in their horns in front of such a great mass of people...”
“The most important thing is, that the Belarusian police has ignored Medschenko`s orders. I agree with Artur in that point”, added Frank.
This time, the village boss had assessed the situation perfectly correct. The mass demonstration in Gomel had been an unexpected success. While the last rally had ended in a bloodbath, the second demonstration had been held without bigger problems and with twice as many people.
All this let the rebels hope. Frank, Alf and Wilden discussed and drank until late at night. They implored the success of their revolutionary efforts and gave each other esperance and confidence.
Eventually, Kohlhaas and Bäumer walked back home, totally drunk, loudly singing the hymn of the *Rus*. They fell blustering into the hallway of their house and crawled babbling into their beds .
“We…we…make it somehow…”, muttered Kohlhaas, while Alf let out a thunderous burp. A moment after they slept.

In the darkness of the night, Frank`s mind showed the young man once more a strange dream vision. Before his inner eye he could see the picture of a giant spaceship. Its body of steel was only weakly illuminated by some starts in the distance, gliding silently through the endless black void.
Suddenly Frank could see the interior of the spacecraft. Hundreds of people huddled there. It were soldiers, wearing futuristic looking suits of armor of a metallic material. The faces of the men were full of fear. Some of them had closed

their eyes and seemed to pray, others just looked nervously around, as if something terrible would wait for them. A tall man with a bionic arm, a scarry face and short hair came to the men and said: “Try to calm down! In one hour we will reach the orbit of Ryann III and the ship will start its final descent!“
The soldiers were silent, looking anxiously at him. The tall man, apparently the leader of the unit, remarked: “I see it in your eyes. You are afraid of the things which may expect us on Ryann III. I know, the Rachnids are terrible enemies, but they are not invincible. We must defend the capital of the planet at all costs. There is no other way!”
“Is it true that these Rachnids have creatures, which are bigger than an imperial tank?, asked a young man with a trembling voice.
“Yes, my boy. But even these creatures can be killed!”
The man slapped on the young soldier`s back with his metallic hand and the blond boy nodded. After a while, the spaceship reached the orbit of the planet whose atmosphere was threateningly glowing in a reddish light. The men went into their drop pods and were ejected from the starship. They cut through the blazing red sky like hailstones, and finally hit the planet`s surface.
A steel door opened with a loud rumble and the frightened soldiers stormed across a desert plain. They had landed in the middle of a battlefield. Around them, countless dead soldiers, tank wrecks and alien creatures covered the dusty ground.
The outlines of a vast horde of insect-like creatures were looming on the horizon. Between the smaller aliens, giant monsters with scythe-like claws tramped forward, uttering fearsome screams.

“They are legion! How shall we defend this city against an entire swarm of Rachnids?”, moaned a soldier, clutching to his laser gun, full of worry and fear.
“We will hold the line, together with our comrades from Ryann III. It would be a disaster if these aliens would ever conquer this planet. This is the junction of the whole space sector“, answered the troop leader with a severe look.
The soldiers were waiting, while the veteran stared at them. Horror and fright marked the often youthful faces of his men and it became worse with each passing second. Meanwhile, the fearsome enemy was slowly coming nearer. It were thousands of creatures. Hissing monsters with spiky, gleaming teeth and razor-sharp claws.
„You can always win, if you have a brave heart! Remember our ancestors, soldiers! Remember *Artur the Great* and *Farancu the Brave*!”, shouted the veteran and his men looked up at him.
“But *Artur the Great* had only to fight against humans, not against monsters like these”, replied the blond boy with a cynical smile.
The troop leader walked towards him and looked deeply into his eyes.
„My boy, *Artur the Great* fought against a much greater number of enemies – many millennia ago. His foes were countless, like the stars of the galaxy. He saved the light-born people from extinction, in a dark age, when all hope seemed to be lost.
Only his strong will and his courageous heart gave him the strength to fight on, even in hours of deepest despair. And it was the same with his general *Farancu the Brave*, who always fought against a superior enemy.”
“But I`m not *Artur the Great* or *Farancu the Brave*, I`m just an ordinary man”, answered the young soldier.

„You can become like them, my boy! You all can become like them! If *Artur the Great* would not have had the courage of a lion, fighting with contempt for death, there would not exsist an empire of mankind today.
Remember him, remember the *Holy Kistokov*, the savior of the light-born people, the forefather of the Aureanic caste, the Redeemer of the righteous! His successors led us Aureans to the stars, but without him, all light on earth would have been extinct – and the *Golden Empire* would have never been found.
Today, we rule over many planets and we will never surrender in front of an alien species. The *Holy Kistokov* has defeated hardship, fear and despair. And will can also defeat them!", shouted the man at his soldiers at the top of his lungs.
"Remember the heroics of our ancestors, if these beasts come over you. Be fearless and follow me!", roared the leader of the unit, waving his bionic arm.
"Why hasn`t *Artur the Great* brought peace?", asked the young soldier the veteran.
"Peace? In the grim darkness of this present, there is only war. Peace is nothing but an illusion, boy!", answered the squad leader and activated his laser gun, while the slobbering, snarling horde of alien monstrosities rushed forward.
Frank startled up like stung by a tarantula, jumping out of his bed, confusedly looking around. The strange vision had almost left his head again and only his shabby, dark bedroom was still there.
"General Farancu…Farancu the Brave…", he muttered quietly to himself. "What a nonsense!"
Then he hid his head under the blanket and tried to sleep, but weird thoughts disturbed him for the next hours and

Frank found no more sleep in this night. Finally, dawn was breaking.

Vitali Medschenko, the governor of the sub-sector “Belarus-Baltic” looked out the window of his splendidly equipped office. His strained eyes wandered across the busy main street which was close to the government district of Minsk. Meanwhile, he was waiting for his guest since almost two hours. In a corner, an old, gilded clock ticked loudly and the penetrating noise interrupted the thoughts of the politician again and again. Eventually, he put the clock in a drawer, where he could not hear the annoying ticking anymore. Outside the government building, a big black limousine appeared now and a well-dressed chauffeur opened a door to let out a middle aged man with shiny, dark curly hair. The visitor had arrived.
Medschenko scratched his broad forehead and stared with his bulging brown eyes at the office door. Then he could hear footsteps in the hall, becoming louder – the guest entered the room.
“Mr. Medschenko, I apologize for the delay”, said the man informally and sat down with a cold smile.
“Yes, no problem, Mr. Jewsonov!”, answered the governor.
“How`s your wife?”, asked the visitor then.
“Well, we have been in Rome three weeks ago. It`s really nice there. My son and my three daughters have also joined our trip”, told Medschenko and offered a juice to his guest.
“No, thank you!”, muttered Jewsonov and looked away.
“Have you been at the lodge meeting in Moscow?”, asked the chubby governor grinning.
“Yes, of course…”, replied his guest soberly.
“What can I do for you, Mr. Jewsonov?”
The black-haired man smiled sardonically. “Well, can`t you imagine, Mr. Medschenko? We demand an explanation

concerning some incidents in your sector", returned Jewsonov and put on a frown.
"You mean the demonstrations of this crazy troublemaker Tschistokow?"
"Yes, what else? We have heard, that this agitator can lead huge protest marches through the cities of Belarus…"
"Well, that's not true, Mr. Jewsonov…"
The guest folded his hands and interrupted the governor harshly. "No, it is true, Mr. Medschenko! Our GSA agents have told me about Gomel. About 30000 of these so called "freedom fighters" have just marched through the streets and the security forces haven`t done anything!"
Medschenko swallowed. "The behavior of the local police will be inspected. This was a unique occurrence. Such an incident will never happen again."
"An onetime thing, right?", Jewsonov gave the polititian a piercing look.
"Yes, there is no reason for any panic!"
"No reason? That`s an odd thing. I have a lot of GSA reports about incidents like that! How can you explain this, Mr. Medschenko?", hissed the guest.
"The police in Gomel had just been prepared insufficently, the last time", answered the governor, clutching at the arm of his chair.
"Insufficently prepared? Is it true that the police chief of Gomel has not supported our GCF units, that he has violated the order to fire, and that he has furthermore shaken the hand of that Tschistokow? Is it true, that he has made arbitrarily agreements with these people, following the motto: "If you behave peacefully, then we do it too?" Give me an answer that convinces me, Mr. Medschenko. I haven`t come all the way from Moscow to Minsk, to listen to some silly excuses!"

“Thus, it is not easy to smash this freedom movement overnight with our means. We need more support! Moreover, our coffers are empty”, stammered Medschenko.
Jewsonov immediately stood up and pointed his forefinger at the governor like the lance of a tournament`s knight. For several seconds, he just fixed the corpulent politician with his oily, dark eyes, while Medschenko was holding his breath.
“The GCF forces around the world have much more important things to do, than worrying about regions like Belarus. I leave it to you to stop that Tschistokow by all available means. Clean up in the ranks of the police and put down this *Rus* scum. Arrest and liquidate anyone, who professes himself publicly to this ridiculous *Freedom Movement of the Rus.*
You have enough resources, if you just use them with more intelligence. We, the GSA command of the sector “Eastern Europe”, demand results now!”
“I will do my best, Mr. Jewsonov!”, promised the corpulent politician, gasping and falling back in his office chair.
“It will have consequences for you, if you fail! A lot of brothers are very dissatisfied, because of your policy. Think about it, and be happy that the World President or the *Council of the Elders* haven`t heard about the situation in Belarus so far!”, grumbled Jewsonov and asked now for a glass of juice.
“Rely on me!”, said Medschenko quietly.
“You know, we have a lot to do in Russia and the other regions of the sector. Your little Belarus or even the tiny Baltic countries are not very interesting for our leaders in Moscow.
Put this bunch of rebels down and finally ensure, that larger sums of money can be extracted from this country in the future”, ordered the GSA man with a smug undertone.

“I will give my best!”, promised Medschenko again.
”Do this, if you want to remain governor. My goodness, that ridiculous street preacher Tschistokow and his rebel friends can`t be stopped by you? I can only laugh about that, Mr. Medschenko!”, smirked Jewsonov and went to the door.
He nodded theatrically, then perked his eyebrows up and left the room without saying goodbye to the governor. The portly politician was left alone in his office, and was staring into space. Shortly afterwards, he grabbed a phone and dialed a number, but he let it ring only once. In a flash, he ended the call again and put the phone on the table. Medschenko stood up, leaned against his desk and drummed with his stubby fingers on the wood.

In the following months, Belarus and the Baltic countries were shaken by a wave of political agitation by Artur Tschistokow`s movement, while Medschenko and his apparatus of power had more and more problems to impede the rebels. Especially in the rural regions of Belarus, in the villages and small towns, the *Rus* attacked the state authority of the sub-sector by all avialable means. Dozens of representatives of Medschenko`s regime were killed during a campaign Tschistokow called “counterterror”.
Local administrators and officials, journalists, attorneys, judges, a few unteachable policemen, notorious Lodge Brothers and some more fell victim to this bloody operation. All had been organized by Peter Ulljweski and his special unit of troopers. The message behind all this was clear: The *Rus* were the new power in these regions and anyone standing in their way would be destroyed!
Frank and the others were constantly on the road until the end of August. Tired and exhausted, they finally allowed themselves a short vacation. Frank had found only rarely

some freetime in the last months, time to think about his life outside the political struggle.
But today was such a day, and the young man thought that he meanwhile felt much better. Days like this were days of musing for Frank. He cracked his brain about this and that, and came to the solution that he was only successful in one thing – in fighting. Everything else was still some kind of unknown territory for him.
Today, Kohlhaas was once more at Wilden`s house and listened to the village boss in the study. The former businessman talked about new strategies and plans for another massive publicity campaign for the autumn and winter months. Meanwhile, the village boss was more than ever some kind of “PR-manager” for the movement, and his family only noticed him as an always babbling shadow in the background.

“Goodbye, Thorsten! Until tomorrow!”, said Frank quietly and closed the door of the study.
He slowly walked down the steps to the lower floor. Before he left the house, he went into the kitchen, where Agatha Wilden and Julia were sitting.
Kohlhaas muttered a silent bye and wanted to leave again.
“Wait, Frank!”, he suddenly heard from behind.
Julia followed him and entered the hallway. “How are you? Are you all right?”
“Yes, thanks for asking!”
“What`s wrong with you in the last time, Frank? Why do you treat me like that?”
“Treat you like what?”
“You know, what I mean?”
“No!”
”Yes, you mostly look right through me. Are you still angry?”
Frank frowned. “No, should I?”

“You are angry because of Viktor, aren`t you?”, said Julia, beholding him sadly.
“I give a shit on that guy!”, growled Kohlhaas.
“Me too. You should know, that I am no longer his girlfriend…”, she answered.
“That`s your thing. Currently, I have more important things on my mind than your love affairs”, he replied gruffly.
“Thus, I just wanted you to know…”
“I knew it anyway!”
Julia stroke through her blonde hair and was embarrassed. “It was a mistake. Viktor has behaved like an asshole!”
Frank paused briefly and smiled. “That`s no new information for me. He is an asshole. I knew it from the first moment I saw him.”
“Do you want to go with me to Steffen`s café tomorrow? Just to chat a bit…”, asked Julia.
“Tomorrow? That`s difficult. Probably Artur will come to Ivas and we have to talk with HOK about some political things”, was Kohlhaas` plain answer.
“Well, I would just be happy”, said the daughter of the village boss and returned to the kitchen with a sad face.
Frank looked after her and stood around for a moment. Then he shouted: “If Artur doesn`t come, then we could go to Steffen`s café!”
“All right!”, it resounded out of the next room.
Frank smiled to himself, while his inner self rejoiced mightily. Of course, he would never ignore this offer of the blonde beauty.
“Women are manipulative creatures from hell!”, he thought with a broad smile. Finally he walked home, still chuckling to himself.

The leader of the *Rus* did not come to Ivas the next day. He was somewhere in Belarus and had also never said, that he

would visit them today. Frank had gotten up early and stood now in front of the mirror in the bathroom, washing, combing, perfuming – since over one hour. Outside, he heard Alf ranting.
“You`re pretty enough! Now let me in, I`ve got to go to the loo!”
Bäumer finally stormed the bath, pushed his friend to the side and occupated the room, while Frank left it growling.
“I go now!”, shouted Frank from the hallway and disappeared.
He walked down the dusty street and feasted on the warm sun rays which gently caressed his face. For some minutes he sank deeply into his thoughts, musing about what he would say to Julia today. He turned at the next corner and saw the yellow and red flowers in front of the house of the Wildens. Julia's mother opened the door and greeted him warmly.
“Do you want to visit Thorsten?”, she asked the young man. “He`s traveling with John Thorphy and will come back tomorrow.”
Frank shook his head. “No, I want to visit Julia!”
The pretty blonde appeared in the hallway and smiled at him. “We go to the village, mom!”
Shortly afterwards they left. Mrs. Wilden threw a pensive look after them.
“I`m glad that you have still come”, said Julia, walking beside her shy companion.
“Thus, Artur has suddenly cancelled his visit…”, he muttered quietly.
“I understand! What a coincidence!”, returned Julia with a grin.
They were silent for a while and finally came to the village square. Some children were playing here and tried to climb up the memorial stone, which was overgrown with scrub.

“Let`s go to Steffen!”, suggested the daughter of the village boss.
“Okay!”, was Kohlhaas` short answer and he was still searching for a topic to talk about.
Julia was a true feast for the eye. She wore her blonde hair open and it fell down her wispy shoulders. Frank looked fascinatedly at the full red lips of the beauty, while she slowly walked in front of him.
“What are you waiting for? Come on!”, she said and Frank followed her.
“She is like Loreley – leading the poor Frank against the rocks...”, he thought to himself.
They crossed the square and went to the small patio outside the café of their Belgian friend. Frank sat down on a plastic chair and was silent.
“Ah, some rare guests!”, exclaimed Steffen de Vries and hurried towards them. “What can I do for you?”
Julia smiled. “I would like to have a milkshake!”
“For me too!”, said Frank.
The Fleming nodded and walked off. Kohlhaas looked thoughtfully at the old church, that the villagers had converted into a meeting house. He still did not really know what he should talk about with Wilden`s daughter.
“What`s about your political struggle?”, she asked then.
“Well, anything runs smoothly at the moment”, he answered.
“My father speaks of nothing else anymore. Revolution, revolution, revolution - here and there!”, she remarked annoyedly.
“Has it ever been different?”
“No, to be honest!”
“And what`s about Viktor?”
She hesitated and stroke through her hair. “I don`t know. I haven`t heard anything from him since weeks.”
“And is it really over?”

“So to speak. He didn`t mean it seriously!”
“I`ve always hated the guy!”
Julia opened her eyes. “I`ve already noticed that!”
Steffen de Vries came back with two milk shakes. Frank emptied his glass with a single sip and said nothing for several minutes.
“I thought that you would go to Grodno one day, and I would never see you again”, said Frank then.
“You don`t have to worry about such things anymore”, replied the young woman with a smile.
“Worry? I just have…”, whispered Kohlhaas meekly.
“I understand, what you mean.”
“What did he do?”, asked Frank.
“He`s an asshole! Not very honest”, meant the blonde.
“Did he cheat on you?”
“I think so. He just wasn`t the right one!”
“Anyway! That is not my affair…”
“No problem!”, said Julia, smiling again.
“Well, it`s nice, that you`re back in town!”
“I would have never left Ivas. I like our village far too much…”
Frank examined the church again, then he looked at the bottom of his glass which was covered with frothy milk. They chatted about some superficial stuff. After an hour, the two left the cafe and wandered around aimlessly.
“See you later! It was really nice. We should meet more often. What do you think, Frank?”, she asked and gave Kohlhaas a wink. Then she walked down the street.
“Yes, sure!”, answered the young man and went back home too. Soon he had reached his house, opened the door and disappeared inside. He finally went into his bedroom to muse about his life.

A few days later, Kohlhaas drove to Belarus and stayed there for some weeks. He tried to forget Julia and all the other private things, and distributed newspapers and leaflets, together with the other young men from Ivas. At the end of the month, the *Rus* demonstrated in Bresk in the south of the country. Tschistokow had mobilized about 15000 people. Before the rally, violent clashes between Belarusians and immigrants from Asia Minor had shaken the city for days. Two men had died and several dozens had been wounded. However, the demonstration itself ran smoothly. The local police did not disturb the *Rus* and GCF soldiers did not appear on this day.

Obviously, Medschenko and his advisors had meanwhile realized, that pressure and terror were not the right means against Tschistokow and his followers. In October, the Belarusian government finally announced the increase of the prices for oil and gas. A wave of anger swept across the country and the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* reached an unknown degree of popularity among the people. Moreover, there were spontaneously organized strikes of steel workers in Minsk and Nowopolozk, and Medschenko had to make concessions for the first time. He finally accepted some minor higher wages for steel workers.

“Wait, until it is really cold. Then the boiler will explode!”, predicted Artur in these days again and again.

And Frank and the others waited. Meanwhile, the young man also believed, that the situation in Belarus might make an uprise possible in the near future.

Abnormal System End

At the end of October, the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* made its first major rally in Lithuania. Artur Tschistokow had chosen Vilnius, the political center of the country. At the same time, there were also some smaller demonstrations in five other Lithuanian cities.
About 10000 men and women marched through the streets of Vilnius, where they encountered a much more aggressive police than in Belarus. After just half an hour it came to heavy riots and firefights. The roughly 500 armed troopers, who were led by Frank and Peter Ulljewski, had a short shootout with the Lithuanian security forces and thirty guardsmen and several officers were killed.
Artur Tschistokow eventually stopped the rally, before they had reached the inner city and Frank and his friends from Ivas fled to Vitebsk. This time, the media of the administration sector “Eastern Europe” reported about the failed demonstration of the *Rus* with their usual scorn. The newscasters spoke of “criminals”, “terrorists” and “rioters”. The agitation lasted almost two weeks. Nevertheless, Artur and his followers were not discouraged. After all, the smaller rallies in the other Lithuanian cities had ended peacefully. After the rally in Vilnius, also Igor, the leader of the Lithuanian section, was arrested by the police and a little later executed, because of “breach of the peace”. The media extensively reported about it again.

“That was big shit!”, hissed Frank, picking in the mashed potatoes on his plate which Alf had cooked.

His tall friend nodded and replied: “I won`t join another demonstration in Lithuania, this is too dangerous for us. We will only attract the attention of the authorities to our village!”
“It has been Wilden`s brilliant idea – once more!”, grumbled Kohlhaas.
“If we would really take over the power in Belarus one day, we can also liberate Lithuania”, returned Bäumer and brought the next pot of mashed potatoes.
“How old are they anyway?”, inquired Frank, pointing at the steaming metal pot.
“What?”
“The potatoes! How old?”
Bäumer scratched his head. “They are from our stock in the cellar!”
Frank made a disgusted face. “They even taste like this…”
His roommate waved his hand and left the kitchen. “You find luxury elsewhere!”
“Will you come with me to Linda?”, asked him Frank.
“Another rally?”
“No, we want to distribute newspapers!”
“Yeah, sure!”, replied Alf and came back into the room.
“Anyhow, I play some “Doom 8” now, buddy!”, said Frank, putting the half-empty plate aside. Then he went into his room and booted the computer.

Thorsten Wilden was again in Belarus and discussed with the inner circle of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* his plans and ideas. Guardsmen units should occupy important strategic aims in a large, nationwide action, when the day of revolution had come. These aims were police stations, town halls, television stations, radio stations and press houses. Furthermore, several factories and supply centers for food, water and electricity. Tschistokow himself propagated the march on Minsk, and planned to lead his armed troopers

and tens of thousands of people to the presidential palace in the inner city, in order to force Medschenko to abdicate.
In the meantime, Frank, Alf, Sven and thousands of other *Rus* spreaded Tschistokow`s propaganda in all parts of the country. For meetings with Julia, Kohlhaas had no more time in these days.
Some of Tschistokow`s men also prepared a general strike of the Belarusian workers and infiltrated numerous production complexes and factories. At the beginning of November, there were further demonstrations all over the country, which were organized by the local group leaders. Meanwhile, the police mostly avoided confrontations with the rebels.
Tschistokow himself had also ordered his followers to use violence only in emergency situations. This brought the *Rus* a lot of sympathies among the frustrated policemen and the local administrators, who slowly realized that something had to change.

Finally, the winter of 2035 came over Belarus, Lithuania and the surrounding countries like an angry nemesis. Already in December, the land was assaulted by a harsh wave of ice and snow which was wrapping everthing in an unbearable cold. Hundreds of homeless and poor people froze to death within a few days in the cities and villages in the Baltic countries and in Belarus. Right now, in the days of massive price increases for oil and gas, the people were haunted by cruel, freezing temperatures, causing a state of wrath and despair in millions of households.
Many Belarusians feared not to survive the cold period. In addition, the rest of the still intact domestic economy collapsed, and also the transport system broke down, as a result of the first massive snowfalls. It was that state of hopelessness and despair, which Artur Tschistokow and his

followers had always hoped for. The rebel leader called the upcoming cold snap, with a certian cynicism, a “gift of God”.
Hundreds of thousands of people who had so far behaved quietly, and had not shown their displeasure with the government, were now driven into the arms of the *Rus* by freezing temperatures and social hardship. The winter whipped them out of their lethargy and literally forced them to show their colors.
At first Artur Tschistokow went to Moghilev, where he held a mass demonstration of more than 50000 people, who mostly came from the city and the surrounding villages and small towns. The freezing and starving crowd besieged the city hall and attacked the police. This time, the armed guardsmen had a lot of problems to maintain peace, but finally prevented a bloody street fight.
Some Belarusian policemen even joined the march at the end, because they suffered more and more under the lack of salary payments and the rising prices for food, oil and gas. In the middle of December, the situation became still worse. This onset of winter was so extreme that the food supply collapsed in some parts of Belarus.
Frank, Alfred and all their comrades took this opportunity to spread the propaganda of their political leader even more vigorously, hammering the slogans of the revolution into the heads of the despaired. Armed units of the *Freedom Movement of the Rus* took over the power in many villages and small towns in the north of the country - with the connivance of the local police and the authorities, that partly joined the rebellion.
The local administrator of Vitebsk was lynched by an angry mob in front of his house, a few days before Christmas. One week later, Artur Tschistokow came to the city and spoke in front of almost 30000 people. The local police accepted his march through the streets and avoided any conflicts.

Meanwhile, Medschenko had already lost control over the situation. In Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev and other cities in Russia and the Ukraine, it also came to riots and hunger revolts, which could be quelled by the security forces after a few days.
Any Christmas parties and the New Year`s festival were cancelled in Ivas this time, because the most inhabitants of the village were helping the *Rus*, supporting their nationwide propaganda campaign. Now, the Belarusian capital of Minsk had to be taken. The time seemed to be ripe for the great march on Minsk, Tschistokow was dreaming about since years. However, the preparations were in full swing.
”The new year must end with the victory of the revolution!”, repeated the rebel leader incessantly.
So they took up all their power, their hate and their hope, to begin the all-important, large-scale attack on the wavering enemy in January 2036.

Frank yawned and crawled out of his bed. Since two days he was back in Ivas and tried to enjoy some free days. Last night the snow had covered the small village with a giant white sheet. They were completely snowed in.
“Damn!”, whispered the young man to himself, looking out the window. Ice flowers studded the glass and blocked the view at the small garden behind the house, which had been smothered by a thick blanket of snow.
“Now we are trapped in this dump!”, he heard a voice behind him.
It was Alf. The tall man was shivering from cold and trudged to the old wood fired oven in the living room.
“What a mess! I`ve never seen so much snow in my whole life. Hopefully, our roof won`t crush down sometime”, muttered Frank and entered the kitchen.

The two men drank some coffee and slowly awaked. After a while they felt the upcoming heat, which was crawling from the living room to the still cold kitchen, giving the room a tolerable temperature.
“The revolution must start without us!”, joked Frank and looked for something to eat. Suddenly he startled up. Someone was knocking on the door.
“Yes, we are already here. Take it easy!”, roared Bäumer annoyedly and hurried down the hallway.

“Alf, thank God, you are at home! Let me in!”, Frank heard a familiar voice behind the front door.
It was the voice of Thorsten Wilden. The village boss was exhausted and confused, his clothes were wet and he was staring into space, while Kohlhaas came nearer.
“They got Julia!”, he said and ran into the kitchen. “Do you understand? They know everything!”
Frank and Alf looked at each other, not knowing what to say. “Thorsten? Are you okay?”
“They have my little angel, the GSA!”, stammered the gray-haired man, gasping for breath.
“What are you talking about, Thorsten?”
“Julia has driven to Grodno - three days ago. She wanted to meet that Viktor, I don`t know any details. This morning, a call, the GSA! They got my Julia!”, lamented Wilden.
Frank spat a big splash of coffee on the table and almost fell out of his chair. “What? You`re kidding…?”
“The GSA has called me this morning, telling me that they have kidnapped Julia. They know about me and my influence on Artur Tschistokow. They know everything about us - and Ivas! Damn!”
Bäumer eyes almost fell out of his skull, Frank was chalky white and puffed quietly. “I hope you are kidding, Thorsten! This can`t be true!”

“No! This is not a stupid joke! It`s the truth! I swear it!”, cried Wilden.
His facial expression did not look, as if he was joking, not at all. Wilden`s eyes stared around with sheer horror, then he began to wail. Frank and Alf offered their guest a chair and the man sank down, totally exhausted. Finally he started to cry and incoherently stammered something. Frank had never seen him in a condition like this before.
“This is a fucking nightmare! God!”, muttered Bäumer, holding his head.
After a while Wilden was able to describe the situation, more or less understandable. Apparently, Julia had driven to Grodno three days ago, after Viktor had asked her to forgive him and had further invited her to some kind of “peace talk”. In spite of the dangerous weather, the pretty daughter of the village boss had accepted Viktor`s offer and had immediately driven off. Since then, Mr. and Mrs. Wilden had not heard anything from her. Until this morning, when Wilden had taken a disturbing phone call. Someone, who had introduced himself as a GSA agent, had told Wilden, that they had kidnapped his daughter. He had described her appearance in detail, and a few minutes later Julia had been allowed to talk to her father.
“That`s the truth!”, wailed the old man and tore his hair. “I haven`t forbidden her to drive to Grodno. God, I`m such an idiot! This weather is dangerous enough…God!”
“Why Julia?”, asked Bäumer with confusion.
“These swines know about me! They observe us since some months, and they seem to know everything about Ivas – and, above all, about me. That guy from the GSA has told me that they know about my big influence on Tschistokow. Furthermore, they are informed that Artur is planning an assault on Minsk…”
“And what shall you do for them now?”, asked Frank.

“I shall dissuade Artur from the march on Minsk!”, cried Wilden, banging on the table.
“Dissuade?”
“Artur mostly heeds my strategic advices, you know that. I shall confuse him, make him indecisive and tell him that the attempt to conquer Minsk is madness. Moreover, I shall stop the financing of the freedom movement immediately. I have managed it with a lot of secret accounts yet!”
“I can`t believe it!”, stammered Frank, holding his head totally overwhelmed.
“If I don`t cooperate, they will kill Julia!”, said Wilden.
“Those bastards!”, growled Alf and smashed his cup against the wall.
Frank tried to think clearly and nervously scratched his back of the head. “How do they know all that?”
“To hell! I don`t know it!”, lamented the village boss.
“She wanted to visit Viktor?”, muttered Frank, while his face contorted itself in rage. Then he hissed: “More exactly please, Thorsten!”
“How many times has Viktor actually been in Ivas?”, inquired Bäumer.
“Several times! He often stayed with us. He wasn`t very interested in politics, this was my impression. Anyway, we didn`t talk very much”, answered Wilden.
“But he still leads the group in Grodno, right?”, said Kohlhaas in wonder.
“More or less, he has quickly given the leadership to another man and finally retired into private life. At least, in the second row. I just don`t know it! Shit!”
“I thought, that Julia and Viktor had agreed to part ways?”, grumbled Frank and seemed to fume with rage.
“Yes, I thought so too. I have no idea, what is going on in Julia`s head. These GSA men must have observed her for a while…”, replied Wilden and continued wailing.

Bäumer angrily looked at Frank. “Do you suspect Viktor? This is nonsense! He isn`t responsible for all this!”
“I haven`t said that!”, said Frank and turned round.
“What shall I do now?” The village boss broke out into tears again.
“Where does Viktor live? Do you have an address?”
“Oh, Frank! Yes, somewhere at home. I think, Agatha has his address. After all, he has visited us several times. Yes, we must find…”
Kohlhaas put on a coat and dragged the whining Wilden out of the house on the street, Alf ran after him. “Come on! We will need you!”
Bäumer wondered and did not really know, what he should do now, while Frank and the village boss trudged through the high snow towards Wilden`s house.

It took over an hour until Agatha Wilden had calmed down a bit, and again and again she sobbed and whimpered silently. Fortunately, however, she had kept the address of Viktor.
“I need to go to Grodno!”, said Frank, while Wilden was wailing quietly.
“To Grodno? How do you want to reach it? There is a whole meter of snow on the roads which lead out of Ivas. Since last night, nobody can leave this village anymore!”, snivelled Agatha.
“Maybe by plane!”, answered Kohlhaas and waved Wilden and his wife nearer.
“Maybe...”, muttered the village boss desperately.
“Follow me!”, said Frank and opened the front door. Then he walked down the snow-covered street. Wilden was trudging after him.

Steffen de Vries, the good-natured Fleming with the reddish beard, looked a little baffled, when he had to leave the breakfast table, because Frank and Wilden had yelled something in front of his house. He surly opened the door.
Kohlhaas explained the situation with all necessary urgency and the horrified Belgian followed his remarks. Thorsten Wilden was silent and just whimpered quietly.
“Flying? In this weather? This is more than dangerous, Frank”, meant Steffen.
“I know that, but it doesn`t snow right now, this might be a chance to get out here. You just have to bring me out of the village, then I will get to Grodno on my own”, said Frank, and also tried to reassure Steffen de Vries now.
“This is risky!”, muttered the Fleming.
“You will do it!”, shouted the village boss and the thick Belgian cringed.
“I will call Alf and get my gun and my cell phone. See you soon!”
Frank raced through the deep snow as fast as he could and finally came back with Bäumer, who was still overwhelmed with the situation and only mumbled away to himself.

Shortly afterwards, Steffen de Vries brought the two men to Varena. When Alf told him, that the village community was no secret anymore, the Flemish family father was horror-struck and remained silent for the rest of the flight. From Varena, Frank and Alf finally continued their trip to Grodno by train. They arrived at the city in the early evening and found a place to sleep in a small guesthouse.
“Basically, that stupid cow hasn`t deserved anything else!”, growled Bäumer and went to bed.
“I`m mainly doing this for Thorsten and the revolution!”, answered Frank and yawned.
“A likely story, Kohlhaas!”

“Do you want to start an argument with me, before we go to sleep?”, grumbled Frank angrily.
“Thus, I`m doing it only for the revolution and not for that stupid bimbo!”, scolded Alf.
“She is no bimbo!”
Alf grinned cynically. “Nevertheless, your beloved valkyrie behaves like one!”
“Anyhow, the revolution must come now, otherwise we are all fucked up”, said Frank with concern.
“I know. This is nothing but a nightmare.”
They talked for another hour and had to force themselves to sleep. Much to deep, the fears and sorrows stuck in their minds. Today they had learned, that their warm and safe nest, the little village of Ivas, was no longer secret. And troubles with the GSA were no fun at all. It was a disaster.

“This is the Staraya Ulitsa!”, said Frank, pointing at a rusty street sign.
“Viktor lives in number 117. Finally, Grodno is pretty big - and ugly”, answered Alf and fetched his DC-stick.
Some minutes later, they reached a gray apartment block. A huge load of snow had piled up on the edge of the sidewalk and a lof of blue garbage bags stood in front of the exterior wall.
Frank pressed a bell button and waited for a short moment, then the entrance door opened with a hum. They went up the stairs to the fourth floor. Now, someone was yelling in Russian in the hallway. It was Viktor. Frank ran towards him. The athletic man looked a bit puzzled at first, but then he put on a smile.
“Hey, Viktor! I`m Frank. Can you remember me?”
Alf came from behind and welcomed the young man too. ”Yes, hello Frank! And hello Alf! What are you doing here in Grondo?”

”We have to ask you a few things. Can we come in?”, said Kohlhaas and Viktor stared suspiciously at him.
He hesitated for some seconds and looked around. Finally he nodded. “Yes! Sure! Come in, my friends!”
They followed him and sat down in a beautifully furnished living room. The young man disappeared into a side room.
”Do you want to drink something?”, they heard.
“No, thanks!”, answered the two in unison.
The Russian came back, sat down in a chair and lit a cigarette. ”What can I do for you?”
“We are looking for Julia! Her father, Thorsten Wilden, has told us that she has gone to Grodno - to visit you”, said Frank.
Viktor looked at him thoughtfully and scraped with his fingers on the leather of the armchair. Then he answered sadly: “Yes, Julia wanted to visit me, but she never came. Where is she?”
“She did not come to you, Viktor?”, asked Alf.
“No! I`m still waiting for her, my friends. I wanted to talk to her. We are no couple anymore, just good friends...”
“Just good friends!”, muttered Frank and nodded, staring at the ceiling.
“I`m full of sorrows!”, remarked Viktor.
“Same here!”, said Frank.
The handsome young man waved his hand and made a sad impression. “I can not help you, my friends. Sorry!”
Frank and Alfred looked at each other and did not answer him.
”Shit!”, hissed Kohlhaas.
Then Viktor talked with them about all kinds of unimportant things and asked them to tell Julia, that she should immediately give him a shout, when she would reappear. The Russian suddenly stood up and went to the toilet. His two guests remained on the sofa, totally frustrated.

“Do you think, that he is telling the truth?”, asked Frank his friend.
”Why should he tell us crap?”
“I don`t trust the guy!”
“You hate him, because Julia still seems to like him!”
“Well, maybe you`re right. Anyway, he can`t help us. We should go...”
Meanwhile, Alf had put is forefinger in a narrow gap between the seat cushions of the sofa, moving it back and forth absentmindedly. Suddenly he sensed a tiny piece of paper and pulled it out. Frank had closed his eyes and looked tired.
“The disaster takes its course. It was all in vain”, he thought to himself and let out a sigh.
In the meantime, Alf tried decipher the Cyrillic text on the piece of paper which he had pulled out of the gap between the seat cushions. It was a receipt of a gas station, from 06.01.2036.
“Vladimir Zolinski, gas station, Prienai”, he read out quietly.
Alf crumpled up the little piece of paper, without thinking. A toilet flushing resounded, while Bäumer put the receipt into his coat pocket. The Russian came back into the living room again.
“Thanks! We have to go now!“, explained Frank and they went to the door.
„Okay! I hope Julia is all right!“, returned Viktor and shook their hands.

After a few minutes, they had almost reached the entrance door of the apartment block. Frank kicked angrily against the banister and Alf seemed to muse.
“What a mess! We`ll never find her!”, muttered Kohlhaas and looked at his friend.

Suddenly Bäumer stopped, took a deep breath and hastily scrabbled in the pocket of his coat.
”What are you doing?”, growled Frank.
“Hold up!”
Alf finally pulled out the crumpled-up piece of paper and stared at it. He breathed heavily.
“Today is the 10th of January, right?”
“Yes! Why?”, returned Frank. “What`s up?”
”This is a receipt of a gas station. It is dated on 06.01.2036 - three days ago. I have found it between the cushions of Viktor`s sofa...”
“So fucking what? Don`t waste my time with this crap?”
”Somebody has tanked up his car at the gas station in Prienai. This is the first gas station you reach, if you come from Ivas and drive further towards the highway!”
“Yes, I know that gas station, but...?”, replied Kohlhaas casually.
”But why was this receipt between the cushions of Viktor`s sofa?”
Frank winced and stumbled against the banister. He looked at Alf with mouth agape and was dumbfounded.

March on Minsk

The two had gone back to her motel room and Alf was trying to calm Frank, who was raging like a mad bull.
“I`m going to beat the shit out of this guy!”, clamored the young man.
“Start thinking, Frank! We need another strategy!”, said Bäumer.
”That bastard is a traitor! He is working for the GSA. I gonna kill him!”
“Now stop this shit! Get a grip! We must keep a cool head!”, meant Alf, touching Frank`s shoulder.
Kohlhaas growled quietly and muttered some curses. Alf suddenly came to him and said: “We lie in wait and shadow Viktor. Perhaps we will find out something.”
“Shadow him? I gonna cut his treacherous throat!”, hissed Frank.
”Yes, run around, scream and shoot – idiot!”, replied Alf.
They finally left the motel and positioned themselves in a doorway near Viktor`s apartment block. Several times, Bäumer had to stop his hot-blooded friend who wanted to kick in the entrance door and attack the Russian. Both men waited until the evening and were freezing. But Viktor did not show up.
On the next day, they had more luck. The Russian came out of his house around noon and the two men followed him quietly through some streets. Eventually, Viktor stopped and went into another apartment block. Frank and Alfred scurried after him and tried to keep him in sight.
An elderly woman, walking with crutches, let him into her apartment. The young man welcomed her warmly and

finally went inside. Frank and Alf stalked after him and listened at the door.
“It`s his mother. He has used the word “Matj”, hasn`t he?”, whispered Kohlhaas.
They hid in a dark corner in the hallway. After about an hour, Viktor left the apartment again. The old woman hobbled after him, still chatting loudly in Russian. Then Viktor walked down to the entrance of the house. Bäumer had to retain his friend once more.
When they were back in the motel, Frank walked nervously through the room and Alf looked at him, shaking his head.
“And now?”
“Great! Now we know, where Viktor`s mother lives!”, growled Kohlhaas. “We should grab that guy and have another smalltalk. I swear, I will make him talk!”
“Use your brain, Frank!”, moaned Bäumer and sat down on his bed.
“What next?”, grumbled Frank.
“I have a better idea. Mrs. Wilden has given you Viktor`s phone number, right?”
“Yes, she has! So what?”
“We`ll do another thing! It is mean, but we are dealing here with the GSA and therefore we also have to be nasty!”
Frank frowned. “What do you mean?”
“I`ll explain it to you...”, said Alf.

Meanwhile, they were already sitting and waiting in the basement of the apartment building since hours. It was getting dark outside.
“What time is it?”, whispered Frank.
“It`s 21.34 o`clock...”, answered Bäumer.
“Okay, let`s go!”
They hurried upstairs and looked around nervously, then they crept over the hallway of the third floor. Frank listened

at the door of Viktor`s mother. Inside, they heard the noise of a TV. Kohlhaas knocked on the door and looked at Alf, while a quiet rumbling came out of the apartment.
“Kto sdjes?”, asked the old woman.
Frank cleared his throat and tried to sound friendly. He explained in a few words, that he was a friend of Viktor and was searching for him. For half a minute the two men heard no sound, then the door was opened and a kind, old lady looked out. “Viktor nje domoi!”
She was interrupted in the next second. Alf came from the side, pushed her back into the apartment at full tilt, and pressed his hand on her mouth. Frank closed the door and held his gun under the nose of the terrified woman. She started to moan anxiously, while Alf dragged her into the living room and told her to be quiet. Shortly afterwards, Frank dialed Viktor`s phone number and waited.

„Da! Sdjes Viktor!“
„Hello! It´s me! Frank Kohlhaas from Ivas!“
„Hey, Frank! What`s up?“
„Tell me where Julia is, Viktor! Where did the GSA men bring her?”, growled Frank into the phone.
“What GSA men?”, asked Viktor with surprise.
„Don`t tell me shit, Viktor! I know, that Julia has visited you!”
“What? She has never been here!”, answered the young man at the other end of the line.
„Viktor, we know she has visited you. Tell me now, where she is!”, barked Frank into the receiver.
“I don`t know, what you want, idiot! Fuck you!”, nagged Viktor and replaced.
Frank called him again and this time the Russian was really angry.
„What the fuck do you want from me, Frank?”
Kohlhaas was fuming with rage. „Do you hear that?“

“Pomogai me, Viktor! Paschalusta!”, wailed the old woman, when Alf held the phone in front of her mouth.
„What the hell...?“, stammered Viktor.
„We got your mother! Tell me where Julia is, or we will kill her! This is no fucking joke!”, threatened Frank.
Viktor seemed to be shocked and whispered something in Russian. Then he was silent.
„If you hurt her, I will kill you, Frank!“, he yelled then.
Frank stayed calm and answered: „Okay, we make a deal. We know, that you are a traitor. But I give a shit on that. Just tell me, where the GSA has brought Julia. Then we let your mother go!”
Alf finally took the phone and gave it to the old woman who begged her son for help, moaning and crying all the time. Then Frank continued to talk with Viktor again und stressed, that he and Alf would immediately kill his mother, if he did not cooperate.
Suddenly the Russian started to wail too and told him, that the GSA had forced him to become an informer.
„They have forced you to do it?“, said Frank. “I don`t believe a word. But I don`t care about that. You must live with it, not me. Now tell me where Julia is!”
Viktor explained him that the GSA men had brought Wilden`s daugther to a hotel in the south of the city. A few minutes later, Kohlhaas had all the necessary informations to strike off.
„If you lie to me, call the police or tell someone anything, Alf will kill your mother!“, hissed Frank into the receiver, put back and left the apartment

While Bäumer was taking care of Viktor`s mother and tried to calm the crying old woman somehow, Frank was on his way to the southern part of Grodno. A taxi brought him to the hotel and he got out of the car in a narrow side street.

Then he ran through some alleys and finally came to a large, dark building.
”Room 32, Floor 5...”, he whispered under his breath and reached for the weapon under his jacket. Frank put on a black baseball cap, trying to hide his face as best he could, and went inside.
A young woman at the reception briefly smiled at him and asked something in Russian, but Kohlhaas just nodded and tried to smile too. Finally, he ran up the staircase. Meanwhile, it was 23.15 o`clock. An old man, dragging some cases down, met him on the stairs. Frank murmured a silent greeting and peered down the dimly lit corridor of the 5th floor.
Nobody seemed to be here. Somewhere behind the door next to him he heard a television. Kohlhaas remained pensive for a few minutes, standing in a dark corner.
“It must go quickly now!”, he said to himself and screwed a silencer on his gun. A minute later, he crept to the door of room 32 and took a deep breath. The adrenaline shot into his head and his heart started to pound wildly. The young man closed his eyes, looked around for a last time and took aim at the door lock.
“Pffft! Pffft!”
Little splinters of wood flew around and he gained access to the unlit room with a powerful kick.
“Kto sdjes?”, he heard out of a corner and a confused man in a brown leather jacket leapt out of the darkness. Frank shot him directly in the head and jumped forward. In the corner of his eye, he could see Julia who had been bound to a chair, staring at him with wide open eyes.
“Frank!”, she yelled.
“Wait!”
”Frank! Behind you!”

Kohlhaas turned around in a flash and recognized another man, coming out of the small shower room next to him. The GSA agent pulled a gun and tried to take aim at him with a terrified look. Frank stepped to the side and fired wildly around. A bullet hit his opponent in the shoulder and the man staggered backwards, screaming in pain. Frank continued to shoot at him until the GSA man slid down the bloodstained wall.
“There`s another one! He is out to fetch cigarettes and will come back in the next minutes. I can`t believe that you...”, stammered Julia excitedly.
“We must take to our heels!”, gasped Kohlhaas, cutting the fetters with his knife and dragging her out of the hotel room.
They hurried down the stairs and ran past some startled hotel guests. Then they disappeared in the dark streets of Grodno, while Frank called Bäumer immediately.
Alf apologized to Viktor`s mother for the inconveniences and finally left her alone. During the night, Frank and Julia hid in a vacant building and met him in the early morning hours. They stole a car and drove back to Kaunas in Lithuania. Here, Steffen de Vries picked them up with his plane and brought them safely back to their snowbound home village.
Thorsten Wilden and his wife could not believe it. They were besides themselves with joy and totally upset, when they held their only child in their arms again. Frank had never seen Wilden that happy and joyful before. He was crying like a little child and could hardly put his gratitude into words.
Kohlhaas was once again the great hero for all, and the whole village paid homage to him - so much, that Frank was almost embarrassed at times. Julia seemed to idolize him now and he could rightly claim, that he had finally won her heart with this rescue mission. It was a strange feeling. Now he had conquered the pretty woman, but he still remained

restrained and uncertain. The praise, coming from all sides, and Julia`s adoring glances, made him feel more confused than inspired. So he avoided to meet Wilden`s daughter in the following days, and did not really know why.
“Maybe I`m only suitable for combat. Peace and love are still foreign to me”, he said to himself.

The month had come to an end. Cold and hunger were tormenting the people of Belarus like never before, while chaos and anarchy were spreading at breakneck speed in the big cities. Food stores were stormed by hungry crowds and sometimes the looters slayed each other for the last piece of bread. Artur Tschistokow finally decided, that the time was ripe to risk everything.
On 01.02.2036, he gave the order to attack the government of the sub-sector “Belarus-Baltic”, what should end with the overthrow in Minsk. On the following morning, his armed units began to form big combat groups and officially took over the most small towns of the country. The majority of police stations was occupied without bloodshed and the officers were disarmed. Often the Belarusian policemen even went over to the *Rus*.
Meanwhile, the leaders of the freedom movement mustered their supporters and organized protest marches and rallies, which propagated Artur Tschistokow`s takeover. Administration buildings, press agencies, radio and broadcasting stations were captured at first in the smaller towns and cities.
Where the servants of the World Government tried to oppose, the rebels put them down with brute resoluteness, and showed that they were ready for anything now. In some small towns, even the local police helped the *Rus* to oust the political opponents. At the same time, the big cities of Belarus were shaken by riots and strikes. Moreover,

hundreds of thousands of workers had laid down their work and banded together, either spontaneously or under the direct guidance of members of the freedom movement.
However, Artur Tschistokow put his focus on Minsk. If it would fail to conquer the capital and to force Medschenko to resign, then the successes in the smaller cities would be effectless in the long term.
Tschistokow finally sent his guardsmen units to Minsk and his men gathered in the vicinity of the capital. Countless Belarusians joined the great march, in spite of the freezing cold, and were now waiting for the signal to advance.
Frank commanded a combat group of over 3000 men, who had gathered in Zdanovicy. Alf remained steadfastly at his side - as always.
After an uncomfortable night of hungering and freezing, the guardsmen units started to move towards Minsk, in the gray of dawn of 04.02.2036. Meanwhile, Medschenko`s last loyal helpers, the GCF occupation troops and some police squads, had sealed off the capital and especially the government district. All in all, it were almost 15000 soldiers, and the policemen, who had not changed sides yet.
Thousands of rebels were marching across closed highways and access roads. They came by car, by foot, with trucks or even occupied trains. Many of them were equipped with modern firearms, others had just axes, iron bars or clubs.
On Wilden`s advice, Artur Tschistokow had commanded his men to occupy some strategically important places, which were responsible for the water and electricity supply of the capital. Here, it came to the first firefights of the day, against GCF soldiers and policemen. Slowly the sun rose on the horizon, but just a few of his rays came through the thick, gray cloud cover. It was incredibly cold and lightly snowing. The merciless frost had tormented the men during the whole

night. The most of them had not eaten something, because the rations were largely depleted. But Kohlhaas ignored his stomach growling as best he could.
The Belarusian troopers started to sing a song and some of them held Russia or dragon head flags in their frozen hands. Frank marched at the head of the column. Alf walked next to him and gave him a tired smile.
“I suggest to make the next revolution in the summer months!”, joked the loyal companion. Frank just nodded and rolled his eyes.
From afar, he could see the outlines of Minsk in the twilight of the morning. The capital was still a fair way off. The marching column moved forward on a broad asphalt street. Several cars had been parked on the roadside and occasionally some people waved at them. Others joined the gray uniformed crowd and started to sing too.
Three big trucks drove past them. It were a few dozen *Rus*, who cheered loudly, holding their flags out the windows. On one of the cars was a stationary machine gun and a group of freezing men had crouched around it.
After an hour, they had reached the outskirts of Minsk. It was snowing heavily now, and some of the Russians started to curse. As they moved through a prefab neighborhood, hundreds of citizens joined the marching column and within a short time about 2000 people followed the guardsmen.
“If it goes belly-up today...”, worried Frank.
“We must conquer this city. There is no more turning back now!”, said Alf with stoic composure.
Shortly afterwards, Frank stopped the column and called Artur. Meanwhile, more and more people were joining the growing crowd, cheering and screaming loudly.
“Where are you now?”, asked Frank.
“I`m in the south of Minsk. We are still waiting for some other groups”, answered Tschistokow.

“How many are you?”
“Maybe about 30000 people!”
“That many? Sounds good!”
“It`s still morning, Frank. Many thousands of people will still come. Everywhere are followers of me!”
After the phone call Frank felt a bit more confident. He yelled some instructions and the column continued to move forward.
”Today Tschistokow will liberate our country!”, chanted the crowd and still more people came out of their houses.
“The meeting point is in front of the security zone, near the presidential palace in the inner city. Artur says, that a great number of our men is still on its way”, said Kohlhaas.
Now the citizens brought the rebels some food. Frank ordered a short rest, then they marched on. The guardsmen had still some kilometers to walk and it was exhausting and arduous, apart from the growing tension that slowly took over the minds of the men.
The column marched up a shopping street, crossed another prefab neighborhood and stopped at a large square, where it was awaited by thousands of screaming people. It took about two hours until they had finally reached the inner city. Meanwhile, Minsk was slowly awaking, while men and women were pouring to the streets, yelling, singing - and willing to end Medschenko`s reign today.
When Frank and his men arrived at the presidental palace, they came upon a giant crowd. Frank had never seen that many people in his whole life. It were tens of thousands.
“It`s 11.00 o`clock now. This looks encouraging!”, said Frank fascinated.
“Somewhere in this mass must be Wilden and the others”, returned Alf.
“Artur has told me, that the rally will start at 13.00 clock. We still have two hours.”

Countless men and women were clogging the streets of the inner city of Minsk to the last corner. In the meantime, the GCF soldiers had planted themselves around the presidential palace and in some outlying districts. They were now facing not only the ordinary Belarusians, but also the renegade policemen, who had come in their uniforms to support Tschistokow`s rebellion.
When the Russian rebel leader finally started his speech at 13.00 o`clock, he stood in front of more than 400000 people.
”How may he feel now?”, thought Kohlhaas and held his breath.
The GCF soldiers behaved quietly at first, and tried to encircle the huge mass as good as possible. Thunderous applause and chants let the asphalt shake, countless flags were waved, while Tschistokow stared at the boiling mass in front of him. Then it began.

„Belarusians, compatriots!
Today, I have come to Minsk to disempower the traitor Medschenko and his servants. And you will help me to end his tyranny!”

The crowd screamed and bawled. Artur Tschistokow went on with his ardent speech and accused the government with cutting words. He demanded, that the GCF soldiers should lay down their weapons immediately, to give him access to the presidental palace.
“At the end of this day, our country will finally be free!”, he shouted into the microphone.
The protesters screamed even louder, while more and more people came from everywhere to see Tschistokow. Then the fanatic revolutionary gave the sub-governor an ultimatum to resign, till 15.00 o`clock.

“Give me the power now, Mr. Medschenko! Otherwise, the enslaved people of Belarus will storm your residence to get their freedom! Don`t challenge us anymore. Your time is over, Mr. Medschenko!“, called Tschistokow at the top of his lungs.

„Tanks!”, Alf pointed at some of the scary vehicles which were coming toward the crowd from afar.
“At 14.30 o`clock, our unit will attack the GCF soldiers in the restricted area at the east side of the palace, got it?”, said Frank.
Kohlhaas called the leaders of the guardsmen squads together. They should wait for his sign, apart from the crowd.
”We have some bazookas, if tanks or Skydragons appear”, he explained.
“What`s about Peter Ulljewski?”
“He leads the other assault force that will attack the palace from the west. The rest comes from the front. If Medschenko doesn`t give up, we will have no other choice than attacking the GCF troops.”
After Frank had uttered these words, he felt the anxiety growing inside him. The young man became aware of the fact that everything had to go smoothly today, otherwise the revolt would fail in the long term.
”We`ll put down these rats – they or us!”, hissed Alf and clenched his fist. Then he went to the troopers, in order to give them further instructions.

While Artur brought the mass into a revolutionary frenzy and preached about the coming age of freedom and justice, the minutes passed without mercy. Nobody could tell anymore, how many people had meanwhile gathered around the security zone. During the last hour more and more had

come, and many of them had armed themselves with everything they could grab. A bloodless victory in today`s fight seemed to become increasingly unlikely.
As the clock showed 14.30, Frank, Alfred and 3000 armed guardsmen moved in a wide arc towards the eastern area of the presidental palace.
From a distance, they could hear Artur Tschistokow`s angry voice, heating up the crowd which responded with loud cheers and screams. When Frank and his troopers moved through a side street, they came upon about 200 police officers, who raised their hands up and lay down their weapons. Frank ordered 50 of his men to guard them, while the rest of the unit marched forward. Now, his watch showed him that the ultimatum had expired.

”Mr. Medschenko! We all hope, that you are sensible enough to come out of the presidential palace now, to give me the rule over Belarus. I`ll give you another quarter of an hour. Resign now and this day will end without bloodshed. I also promise to spare you, though you do not deserve it!”, shouted Tschistokow defiantly.
But even these minutes passed without any reaction of Medschenko. The sub-governor had already escaped from Minsk two days ago, and had left it to the GCF and the police to protect the presidential palace. Meanwhile, he was in Moscow to seek asylum at his fellows.
”The time is up! Now, the people of Belarus will take their freedom by force!”, heard Frank the leader of the *Rus* call in the background. The crowd roared and shots were fired. It became bloody.

“Follow me!”, shouted Frank and waved his men nearer. They ran forward and started to fire immediately, while the first GCF soldiers became visible behind a barricade.

The rebels attacked them with a loud scream and some hand grenades detonated. Frank and Alf jumped behind a car. The numerically superior Russians swarmed out and charged the GCF soldiers behind the barricades from two sides. Frank crawled to a battered car, while he heard bullets hitting the sheet of the vehicle.
Bäumer hurled a hand grenade and ripped a hole into the barricade in front of him. Some GCF soldiers ran screaming out of a cloud of smoke.
With a loud warcry the troopers in the gray shirts rushed forward, fired at their enemies and slaughtered them in a brutal shooting and stabbing. One of the rebels even had a flamethrower on his back and unleashed a fiery jet on the soldiers behind the cover.
“They`re trying to backtrack towards the palace!”, shouted Frank and shot a GCF soldier in the back.
Kohlhaas looked around. A few dozen rebels were dead or wounded. The rest rushed forward, screaming loudly. Suddenly a heavy machine gun salvo pounded through the mass of the charging guardsmen.
“Damn! Four of these tanks!”, shouted Alf and hit the dirt.
The rolling monsters came from behind the presidential palace and shot at everyone in their way, while Frank jumped like a cat behind a barricade. One of the tanks was destroyed by a bazooka, but the other vehicles unwaveringly rolled forward, mowing down a group of guardsmen.
“Who has anti-tank mines?”, yelled Frank at some Russians.
The young men anxiously shrugged their shoulders. Kohlhaas dragged one of them behind the barrier and rummaged his backpack.
“Look! This is an anti-tank mine!”, he hissed and held a limpet mine under the nose of the Russian.

Another armored vehicle detonated a few meters away from him, after another bazooka hit. Nevertheless, more and more guardsmen tried to escape from the dreaded vehicles. Frank jumped behind one of the armored beasts and heard a machine gun salvo sweeping over his head. He fixed the mine at the rear part of the tank, which exploded shortly thereafter with a loud bang.
Then the bazookas destroyed also the last enemy vehicle. They had finally taken the eastern part of the security zone. Shortly afterwards, the rebels occupied the barricades, the GCF soldiers had built before. Now they had even conquered some heavy machine guns. During the next hour, they stopped a counterattack of the GCF and finally drove the enemy back towards the palace.

While Frank and his comrades struggled through the curtian fire of the defenders, Peter Ulljewski`s men, at the opposite side, were in a bloody firefight too. In the meantime, the large crowd tried to storm the presidential palace from the front. Tens of thousands of roaring, frenzied Belarusians clashed against the GCF soldiers in front of the huge building, while hundreds of men and women died in a murderous hail of bullets.
It was a slaughter. Within minutes, the first attackers fell down, screaming, bleeding and dying, while the onrushing crowd behind them was in such a frenzy, that they could not be stopped anymore.
The greatest part of the Belarusian policemen, who had followed the commands of the sub-governor so far, was seized by panic in the face of this carnage and fled or surrendered. Many of them were lynched by the raging citizens or shot down by Tschistokow`s guardsmen. Finally, the remaining GCF soldiers ran back into the palace or fled too.

Frank gave his men the order to get through the side entrance of the huge building and the rebels stormed forward with a loud war cry. Some GCF soldiers fired out the windows in panic, and killed a lot of charging troopers.
”Give it to me!”, yelled Alf, pulled a bazooka out of a guardsman`s hand and fired a thunderous shot at the front window. A deafening bang followed and concrete parts rained down on the heads of the men, while other guardsmen attacked the GCF soldiers in the building with grenade launchers.
Finally the *Rus* stormed the eastern part of the palace and mowed down everyone in their way with furious bursts. Frank jumped over the dead body of a comrade, who was riddled with bullets, and threw a hand grenade into a side room. After a deafening detonation, three heavily wounded GCF soldiers staggered out of a cloud of smoke, tumbling directly in front of the muzzle of Kohlhaas` weapon.
He shot them down and looked grimly around to seek further enemies. Now he heard shots and screams, coming from the entrance of the presidental palace, while his guardsmen struggled through the chaos, trying to reach the next corridor.
Meanwhile, the angry crowd streamed through the magnificent entrance hall of the building and overpowered a group of enemy soldiers. Then they smashed everything around them to pieces in their unbridled fury.
Artur Tschistkjow stared at scenario in front of him. Dozens of dead and wounded men were lying everywhere in the hall. Suddenly, a soldier at the end of the ornate staircase, which led to the upper floor, was waving a white flag.
”Okay! We give up!”, he shouted.
Some armed troopers pointed their guns at him, but Artur held them back.

”Everyone of you, who stops fighting now, will not be killed!”, replied Tschistokow.
The GCF soldier and a great number of his comrades finally came down the stairs and took the opportunity to surrender. Many raging citizens spat at them or tried to beat the soldiers, and the guardsmen had a lot of problems to stop the angry crowd from lynching the hated occupiers.

Frank and the survivors of his unit rushed into the hall and finally found Tschistokow. The blond man smiled and embraced Kohlhaas with tears in his eyes.
“We have done it!”, he gasped wearily.
”Yes, the presidential palace is taken!”, yelled Frank and raised his fists. The people around him cheered in a flush of victory.
Artur Tschistokow let the surviving GCF soldiers herd together and guard by his troopers. Then he walked up the stairs and walked down a long corridor, adorned with wall hangings and old paintings, right to the office of the sub-governor. His men followed him and started to sing the hymn of the freedom movement. Now Tschistokow took a dragon head flag from one of his guardsmen, opened the window and waved it in front of the huge screaming crowd below him. He enjoyed this moving moment and closed his eyes. Tens of thousands of men and women were shouting his name – again and again.
Frank and Alf stood beside him and looked at the endless sea of people, covering the whole inner city of Minsk. Shortly thereafter, Wilden, who had a laceration on his forehead, entered the room too. The gray haired village boss was weeping for joy, and for a short moment he looked like a happy, young man again.

Dawn of Hope

Artur Tschistokow was worshipped by the people like a newly crowned king and proclaimed the refoundation of the Belarusian state. Meanwhile, his men controlled the most important newspapers and TV stations in the country and spreaded the message of the revolution to the last corner of Belarus.
Thorsten Wilden was now the foreign minister in Tschistokow`s new cabinet. Frank Kohlhaas was solemnly appointed as a “General of the Volksarmee of Belarus”. Piece by piece, the *Rus* took over the power in all regions of the land and after a few weeks they controlled the entire administration and the media.
Furthermore, thousands of servants of the fallen regime were arrested by Tschistokow`s men. Although, many proxies of the World Government had already fled across the borders into the neighboring countries.
After his triumph, Artur Tschistokow organized a huge mass rally in Minsk and announced the political goals of the new government. Other major events followed in all bigger cities across the country. Now it was time to act and to secure the won power by all available means. One important tool to influence the masses in the sense of the revolution, were the media, that repeated Tschistokow`s principles again and again. In return, many journalists and editors of the past, who were viewed as treasoners, fell victim to a first execution campaign.
At the end of February, the *Rus* finally expanded the revolution to Lithuania. Tens of thousands of people besieged the headquarter of the Lithuanian government in Vilnius and forced the local administrator to resign too. The

Lithuanian police went over to the rebels and the small number of GCF soldiers left the Baltic country without resisting. Artur Tschistokow made Mikhail Gromov, the commander of the Lithuanian section of his organization, to the interim prime minister of the tiny land.
Soon after, the new rulers started a bloody crusade of revenge all over Belarus and in the southern Baltic. Special units under the leadership of Peter Ulljewski showed no mercy on those, who they regarded as collaborators and supporters of the World Government.
Tschistokow did not talk much about these actions, but Frank and Alf knew that they were brutal and ruthless.
“We must destroy those, who wanted to destroy the future of our children!”, he just said.
Tschistokow gave his men free rein to start their retaliation campaign, if they only followed his orders.
„We must be hard! There is no more room for mercy and forbearingness in this struggle for the survival of our nation, because our enemy is much too dangerous to fight him half-heartedly!”, preached the rebel leader in these days.
However, sub-governor Medschenko, his closest advisers and some other senior members of the fallen regime, had already fled to Russia.
Furthermore, Artur Tschistokow expelled all the foreigners, who had been brought to Belarus and Lithuania by the lackeys of the World Government. In this context, there were still some riots in the bigger cities which were finally quelled by the police and Tschistokow`s guardsmen. Those who did not leave the two countries voluntarily, were forced to go if it was necessary.

“It`s done!”, said Wilden, raising his glass, while the villagers in the old church of Ivas cheered at him. Frank had finally returned to his home village and enjoyed the short period of

rest. Julia snuggled into his arm and Alf took another bottle of vodka from the table.
“My father will soon obtain another apartment in Minsk”, said Julia.
“This will be necessary, he is our new foreign minister anyway!”, answered Kohlhaas and smiled at her.
“I hope we will find some peace now...”, groaned the daughter of the village boss.
“Peace? This must be a joke. Now, the real troubles begin! Don`t even think, that the World Government will just watch our little revolution, without doing anything”, remarked Alf.
“Let`s forget all this crap for some hours, okay?”, said Frank.
Without thinking twice, he kissed Julia and the young woman winced. Then they caressed each other, while Bäumer shook his head.
“What a nice end, isn`t it?”, he muttered and emptied his glass.
Frank and Julia did not pay attention to the grumpy giant. They just relaxed and banished all the policy from their minds. It was a wonderful evening.

Alexander Merow`s “Prey World” books (Part 1-3, German version):

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Prey World I - Citizen 1-564398B-278843

The year 2028. Mankind is in the stranglehold of a worldwide surveillance state. Frank Kohlhaas, a petty citizen, lives a cheerless life, working as an agency worker in a steel plant.
One day, he gets into a conflict with the tyrannical system, because of an unfortunate accident. An automated trail convicts him to five years of imprisonment and Frank disappears in a detention centre, where he suffers under a cruel system of brainwashing and reeducation. After eight months of pain, the authorities decide to transfer him to another prison. On the way there, something unexpected happens. Suddenly everything changes and the young man finds himself caught between the fronts...

Prey World II – Rebellion Beyond

Oppression and manipulation are the order of the day in the year 2030. Only one single nation had been brave enough, to fight for its independence – Japan.
Frank Kohlhaas, Alfred Bäumer and millions of desperate people look at the Japanese president Matsumoto who has liberated his people. But the Lodge Brothers are not willing to leave the renegade nation in peace. They slander the Japanese with a big hate campaign and plan a military strike to bring the rebellious Asians to their knees.

Frank and Alfred decide to join the Japanese fight for freedom as volunteers. Soon the situation gets out of control and the fight against the New Worlder Order becomes a bloody nightmare.

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